

SOME ASPECTS OF SHĪ'ITE PROPAGANDA  
Under the Fātimids in Egypt.

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THESIS for the DEGREE of DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY.  
in the University of London.  
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ARABIC LITERATURE

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A BIOGRAPHY of AMRU

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DR. HASSAN'S BRILLIANT WORK

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("Egyptian Mail" Special.)

A history of Amru ibn Al-Aas, by Hassan Ibrahim Hassan, docteur è lettres, Al-Saada Press, Cairo, 1922. Price P.T. 20.

The author of this valuable work is the third graduate of the Egyptian University upon whom that august body has conferred the title of Doctor, and the work under review is the treatise he submitted when that title was conferred upon him.

Of all the Arabian leaders of the early days of Islam, none is more interesting to the Egyptians than this famous general and administrator who conquered Egypt and was its ruler till his death, and as there was no biography of him in Arabic, Dr. Hassan has rendered a great service by telling us all about this remarkable man in a portly volume of over two hundred and sixty pages.

In his preface Dr. Hassan speaks of the work he undertook and the difficulties with which he was confronted. "The historian is responsible before the Court of History for the work he undertakes," says the author. "To write the history of a man like Amru requires study of the age in which he lived, and a complete knowledge of the state of the Arab nation before the Prophet and during the age of the Rashidite Caliphs up to the beginning of the Amawi dynasty, to be able to realise all that Amru did, his conquest of Syria, Palestine,



Egypt and Tripoli, and his conduct with Osman, Ali and Moawia, and if I have attempted to write this history, it is in order to refute the imputations against Amru reproduced by many historians, to which they made either no reply, or gave no decisive reply, such as the burning of the library of Alexandria, said to have been done by his order, his relations with the Makokas, etc."

Dr. Hassan tells us that Amru belonged to an influential family of Mecca which took part in managing the affairs of Koreish, and that his father was a wealthy merchant who traded in Syrian and Abyssinian goods. He then discusses the date on which Amru was born, which he fixes at 602 A.D., and proves that he died at the ripe age of ninety years. He explains why the tribe of Koreish engaged particularly in commerce which was due to the fact that the land is a barren desert unfit for agriculture, and to the energy and activity of that tribe.

It was during one of Amru's visits to Jerusalem that he first heard of Egypt from a Christian monk, who told him that there was no country like it, and he finally accompanied him there and saw with his own eyes how true was the description of the monk. Not long after, Amru was converted to Islamism and was made Commander of one of the Prophet's armies sent to call the tribes to his religion, and on the death of the Prophet, Amru was sent by Abu Bakr to conquer Syria and Palestine, whence he pushed on to Egypt, which he also subsequently conquered.

Dr. Hassan gives us a graphic description of Egypt at that time, and tells us a great deal about the persecution of the Copts for their religion by the Romans, from which date began their own Calendar known, not A.D., but "of the martyrs"; the religious disputes among the Copts, the tyranny of the



Romans, the heavy taxes imposed upon the Copts, Amru's relations with the Makokas, and other details are given at great length. The chapter dealing with the Makokas, on whose identity the historians have not agreed, his name, his nationality, his functions, the origin and meaning of his title, is one of the most interesting in the book, and reads very much like a novel. It was this man who concluded the treaty with Amru, the conditions of which are given in detail.

The destruction of the library of Alexandria by fire is also dealt with in detail, and the learned author indignantly repudiates the idea that this destruction was wrought by order of Amru. As a matter of fact, this library, says the author, was burned before the advent of Amru; indeed it was burned twice, the last time in 391 A.D. by Christian fanatics.

The concluding part of the book speaks of what Amru did in Egypt, and is too long to deal with in detail; it comprises the building of the city of Al-Fustat, the Nilometer, the digging of the Khalig connecting the Nile with the Red Sea, the construction of irrigation works.

From the above short account of the contents of this highly important work we see how thoroughly the author has accomplished the task he set before him. Like a true historian, he has connected events with the causes which led to them, and he has compared the statements of the various historians, Egyptian and foreign, before giving his own opinion on the facts in dispute. There was a great need for a biography of this truly great Arab, and the author deserves our thanks for the able and scholarly manner in which he has accomplished his task requiring considerable research. The book is well printed and illustrated with several maps and photographs of the remains of Al-Fustat, the mosque of Amru and other places of interest.

S.S.



From an article under the heading of "An Arabic Bookmarket." The latest Arabic Works and their Authors.

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Last summer, in these columns, I referred to a historical work of particular interest, The Political History of Egypt, by Mohamed Rifat Bey, Lecturer on History at the Sultanic Training College, and I now wish to introduce the readers to another original work, The History of Amru Ibn al Aas, the great Moslem general who conquered Egypt in the early days of Islam. The author of this important contribution to the history of Egypt is Hassan Effendi Ibrahim Hassan, teacher in one of the Government schools and holder of the degree of doctor in literature from the Egyptian University. So far as the present writer is aware, no history of Amru exists in Arabic or any other language; one meets with his name in general histories, but from which tribe this general rose, his travels as merchant before and after his conversion to Islam, his wars and conquests, what he did in Egypt, his relations with the Caliphs - in a word all about the man and his deeds, which are matters of considerable interest particularly to Egypt - have not before been collected and presented to the public.

Dr. Hassan has certainly done his work in a scholarly manner, for, like the true historian he is, he began by describing the Arab nation at the time Amru was born, and takes us step by step through his long life, until he brings us to the conquest of Egypt, when the book becomes of enthralling interest, throwing light on such matters as the condition of the country at that time, the Copts, and particularly on



Makokas, a man whose identity and functions were not quite clear, the destruction of the great library of Alexandria, the building of Al Fustat and other matters of the highest interest. Dr. Hassan is not satisfied with a mere narrative of the events; he explains how and why they came about, and their influence on the conditions of the country, thus presenting us with a valuable work for which there was great need, and which I hope some enterprising Egyptian will translate into English for the enlightenment of European historians. The amount of labour and research entailed in the preparation of this book can be estimated from the long list of Arabic and foreign works consulted, which speak volumes of the author's patience and industry.

While congratulating the author on his excellent work, I hope that young Egyptians of high education will continue to come forward with such original works from time to time, to prove that, in the domain of serious literature, they are not inferior to the scholars of more advanced countries.

PHILADELPHIA      THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
The University of Pennsylvania is proud to have  
efforts to spread their light and knowledge among the people of  
the world.

(1) The geographical situation of Egypt, which was the  
where all the propaganda was carried out and the first where it  
succeeded in establishing an independent regime.

(2) The wealth and resources of Egypt as compared with  
other countries in the East.

(3) The circumstances and conditions which have led to the  
the present situation in Egypt and the East since the  
their conquest of Egypt.

(4) Egypt, rather than the Kingdom of Egypt, the Kingdom of  
the East of the Mediterranean.



## ABSTRACT

*Some*  
"Certain Aspects of Shi'ite Propaganda under the Fātimids in Egypt". Stress is particularly laid upon two aspects of Fātimid propaganda in Egypt, viz. Education and Literature.

(1) Chapter I. An account of the Shi'ite propaganda up to the rise and establishment of the Fātimid Khilāfah in N. Africa. The beginning of the Shi'ite propaganda in the reign of 'Uthmān, the third Khalīfah, its continuation during the Umayyad dynasty, and the passing of the right to the imāmah from the 'Alids to the 'Abbāsids, and their mutual hostilities after the establishment of the 'Abbāsid Khilāfah. The failure of subsequent Shi'ite propaganda to establish an independent 'Alid empire in the East, and the transference of this propaganda to the West (N. Africa) and the causes which favoured its success there. An account of Abū 'Abdī-llāh's career of conquest in N. Africa up to the establishment of the Fātimid Khilāfah.

Chapter II. A discussion of the genealogy of the Fātimids. The importance of Egypt for the Fātimids in the efforts to spread their Shi'ite doctrines under the following headings:

(a) the geographical situation of Egypt, between the East where Shi'ite propaganda had failed and the West where it succeeded in establishing an independent empire.

(b) the wealth and tranquility of Egypt as compared with Muslim dominions in the East.

(c) these circumstances as favouring the establishment of the Fātimid authority in Egypt and in the East soon after their conquest of Egypt.

(d) Egypt, rather than the Maghrib made by the Fātimid centre of Shi'ite propaganda.



Chapter III. Educational Propaganda: The organisation by the Fāṭimids of their propaganda in the mosques and libraries; the royal palace becomes the centre of Shi'ite propaganda, which is carried on by the Chief DĀ'Ī and his assistants and supported by the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs themselves.

Chapter IV. Literary Propaganda: The part played by the poets, scribes and learned men in the spread of the Fāṭimid propaganda and the influence upon these learned men, and the poets in particular, were of the lavish grants made by the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs and their wasīrs and other men of high status.

Each separate reign of the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs is considered in detail.



## FOREWORD

In my preface to the 'History of 'Amru-bnī'l-'Ās, I said "To write a history of a man like 'Amr requires study of the age in which he lived, and a thorough knowledge of the state of the Arabs before the days of the Prophet and during the age of the first four Khilāfahs up to the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty in order to be able to realise all that 'Amr did, his conquest of Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Tripoli, and his relations with 'Uthmān, 'Alī, and Mu'āwiyah" etc.

In this present dissertation on the Shī'ite Propaganda under the Fāṭimids in Egypt, there is a similar pre-requisite viz. a thorough knowledge of the state of the Arabs before and after the establishment of the Fāṭimid Khilāfah in N. Africa in order to show how the Fāṭimids were able to establish their authority in Egypt and thence extend it over other 'Abbāsid dominions, next, we must ascertain how they initiated their propaganda in Egypt before and after their conquest of it and how they organised and carried it on up to the fall of their Khilāfah.

So far as I am aware no history of the Shī'ite propaganda under the Fāṭimids in Egypt exists in Arabic or in any other language; there are references to this propaganda in general histories, and some of the works written by modern historians deal with the Fāṭimids from the political point of view, but how the Fāṭimids established, organised, and carried on their propaganda in the various mosques and libraries, and in the royal palace, and how they encouraged poets, learned men, and writers by awards and posts, and bestowed grants on a lavish scale upon them, are matters of considerable interest which



have not before been collected, discussed, and presented to the public in an original work.

The Fāṭimid period was an era of prosperity to Egypt. In his Literary History of Persia (I.395), Prof. Browne cites a few lines from René Dussaud's 'Histoire et Religion des Nosairis' (Paris, 1900) whom he considers to be one of the very few Europeans who have appreciated the good points of the Ismā'īlian sect as follows:.... "Thus the disappearance of the Fāṭimids, who brought about the triumph of the Ismā'īlī religion in Egypt, concludes an era of prosperity, splendour, and toleration such as the East will never again enjoy". It is in order to emphasise these characteristics of the Fāṭimid Khilāfah in Egypt that I have selected this particular part of Egyptian history.

In the present thesis, stress is particularly laid upon two aspects of the Fāṭimid propaganda in Egypt, viz., education and literature, for which there is ample material, that has hitherto been unpublished.

By the help of this unpublished material I have been able to throw light on such matters as the Fāṭimid propaganda in the royal palace, the genealogy of the Fāṭimids, and the part played by the poets in the spread of the Fāṭimid propaganda and their encouragement by grants and posts, etc.

The first chapter giving a sketch of the Shi'ite propaganda up to the rise of the Fāṭimids and the establishment of their Khilāfah in N. Africa, is necessary, firstly in order to give unity to my treatment of the subject, and secondly in order to provide at the outset the necessary explanations of various Shi'ite doctrines.

In order that my Thesis may form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject with which it deals, I have made a diligent search in the hope of discovering fresh facts



and have applied to them an independent and critical judgment. I have pursued investigations among the manuscripts in the British Museum, in the 'Bibliothèque Nationale', Paris, in the Royal Library, Cairo, and in the University Libraries of Leyden and Berlin.

As a result of my search a good deal of material has been copied and incorporated in my thesis; but such material forms only a part of the many MSS. perused, for several of them furnished little that was new and others were searched through and through to no advantage.

Among published sources, some writings such as Ibn Hānī's 'Diwān', Ibn Munjib's 'Ishārah', 'Umarah's 'Nukat' and 'Diwān', Ibn Muyassar's 'Annals of Egypt', and Maqrizī's 'Itti'āz', have only been recently published and have hitherto not received the careful attention of historians. The authors of the first three works, as will be shown later, were contemporary Fāṭimid writers while Ibn Muyassar (A.H. 677, A.D. 1278), who died about 110 years after the fall of the Fāṭimids (A.H. 567; A.D. 1173), and Maqrizī (A.H. 845; A.D. 1441) who, besides the fact that he was a devout Shī'ah and a descendant of the Fāṭimids, had access to a number of important works written by contemporary Fāṭimid writers, are especially trustworthy authorities on this particular subject.

In addition to this Thesis, I submit four copies of the 2nd edition of my Thesis approved for the Degree of Doctor of Literature in the Egyptian University, Cairo, 1921, to which is attached some reviews which appeared in certain Egyptian papers soon after the appearance of the 1st edition in 1922.



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The sources for Fāṭimid history may be divided into three groups according to the period in which the works were written viz. before the Fāṭimid Khilāfah, (and such works are indispensable for the account they give of the Shī'ite propaganda up to the period of the rise of the Fāṭimids), during this Khilāfah, and after its fall.

The part of my Thesis dealing with the Shī'ite propaganda up to the establishment of the Fāṭimid rule in Qayrawān is based upon such authors as Ibn Sa'id (+ A.H.230; A.D.844) in his 'Tabaqāt', Ṭabarī (+ A.H. 311; A.D. 923) in his 'Al-Umam wa-l-Mulūq', and Mas'ūdī (+ A.H.346; A.D.956) in his 'Murūj' and 'Tanbīh'. The works of Ṭabarī and Mas'ūdī are described by Prof. Nicholson (A Literary History of the Arabs, p.472) as 'the most ancient and celebrated Universal Histories in the Arabic language'. Al-Munyatū wa-l-Amal, B.M.Or.3772, by Ahmad b. Yahyā (Al-Murtaqā + A.H.325; A.D. 936-37) the first treatise of the work entitled Ghāyātu-l-Afkār', B.M.Or. 3937, a full exposition of the Zaydī law, is valuable for its account of the Shī'ite faith as a whole, particularly the Traditions recorded to have been uttered by the Prophet regarding the Imāmah of 'Alī after him. It is unfortunate that Ahmad b. Yahyā and other Zaydī Shī'ite authors, and even contemporary or later Fāṭimid authors, did not take the trouble to give an account of the Ismā'īlian sect. Akhū Muḥsin only who flourished during the fourth century A.H., and refuted the genealogy of the Fāṭimids, mentions this sect but his work only survives in the extracts quoted by Nuwayrī who lived in the eighth century A.H., and later by Maqrizi.



The contemporary Fāṭimid authors available to me, are the following:-

Ibn Hānī's (+ A.H.362; A.D.973) 'Dīwān' contains valuable material on the part played by the poets in the spread of the Fāṭimid propaganda. The poems included in this poet's Dīwān were mainly composed in honour of the Fāṭimid Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz; he commemorates the noble deeds of this Khalīfah, and extolls the Shī'ite propaganda, even going so far as to claim for his master certain attributes of the Prophet and of God. Ibn Hānī gave the lead to the succeeding poets.

Another contemporary Fāṭimid work is "Rasā'ilu-l-Hākim bi-Amr-illāh wa-l-Qā'imīna bi-Da'watih", a MS. in the Royal Library in Cairo, containing twenty treatises written by various dā'īs under the Khalīfah, Al-Hākim. This work gives a full idea of the methods in which the Shī'ite propaganda was spread by the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs and their supporters in the royal palace and sets out clearly Al-Hākim's claim to divinity. In his 'Exposé de la Religion des Druzes' and 'Chrestomathie Arabe', De Sacy has consulted several other works on the Druzes which exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale under Nos. 1408, 1416, 1427 and 1429 and bear the title Kitābu-l-Mashāhid wa-l-Asrāru-t-Tawḥīdiyyah li-Mawlānā, but, as will be shewn later, De Sacy has only translated four treatises while the others are dealt with in brief outline, with a summary of the contents, an explanation of the heading of each treatise, and a mention of the date in which it was written. The Cairo MS. furnishes us with valuable material which has hitherto not been published, and is, therefore, one of the original sources of our dissertation.

Again, Nāsir-i Khosrau's 'Safar Namah' is, undoubtedly, a valuable contribution to the history of the Fāṭimids, for besides the fact that Nāsir-i Khosrau was a devout Ismā'īlian,



his detailed description of his visit to Egypt (A.H.439-441) during the Khilāfah of Al-Mustangir gives a reliable account of the prosperity and wealth of Egypt under the Fāṭimids.

Moreover, Ibn Munjib's (+ A.H.542; A.D.1147) 'Al-Ishārah fi-man Nāla-l-Wisārah' furnishes original and trustworthy material for Fāṭimid history. For Ibn Munjib, one of the well-known notables of his time, was in charge of the Correspondence Department in A.H.495 (A.D.1101) - in the time of the Khalīfah, Al-Āmir - which he directed up to the year A.H. 536; A.D.1141, and he distinguished himself both as a scribe and a historian. The biography of this author is given by Yāqūt (Mu'jamu'l-Udabā', V.422) and Ibn Muyassar (Annals, II.87), Ibn Khallikān, and others.

Further, 'Umārah of Yemen (+ A.H.569; A.D.1174), a court poet under the last two Fāṭimid Khalīfahs, has furnished us in his 'Hukat' and 'Dīwān' with valuable material on the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs, their wazīrs, and other men of high status, with whom he was associated and benefited so much from their favour and liberality that he devoted his energies to the Fāṭimid cause and finally lost his life while taking part in the conspiracy against the Ayyūbids to restore the Fāṭimid power.

Lastly, 'Imādu-d-Dīn Al-Kātib of Isfahān (Isfahan) + A.H. 599; A.D.1201, is one of the chief sources for this dissertation. This Kharīdatu-l-Qaṣr, or 'Virgin Pearl of the Palace' has provided most of the material used in our account of the poets and writers in the later part of the Fāṭimid period (A.H.466-567; A.D.1073-1171). It originally consisted of ten volumes, according to Ibn Khallikān, and dealt with the poets of the various Muslim countries. Of this valuable work, six volumes exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale (MSS.Nos.3326-3331) and the third of these MSS. No.3328, deals mainly with



the poets of Egypt and Palestine; accounts of the poets of Egypt are also given in the MS. No.3329. As the author himself states, he heard the poems included in his work from the tongues of contemporary poets and writers such as Usāmah b. Munqidh, and Al-Qāḍī Al-Fāḍil.

Of other works consulted mention must be made of the 'Iqd' by Ibn 'Abdī Rabbih (+ A.H.329; A.D.940), the Fihrist by Ibnu-n-Nadīm (+ A.H. 383; A.D.993). Valuable as the latter work is, it is not invariably accurate, for as will be shewn later, Ibnu-n-Nadīm attributed the account given by the Sharīf Akhū Muḥsin on the genealogy of the Fāṭimids to Ibn Razzām, and this ascription according to Nuwayrī and Maqrizī who himself possessed the work of Akhū Muḥsin from which Ibnu-n-Nadīm quoted him, is obviously a mistake.

The 'Saqtu-z-Zind' and the 'Luzūmiyyāt' of Abu-l-'Alā' Al-Ma'arrī (+ A.H.449; A.D. 1057) have supplied us with valuable material, particularly the part dealing with the doctor and poet, 'Abdu-l-Wahhāb b. Naṣr Al-Mālikī. Yāqūt (Mu'jamu-l-Buldān) was of great value on this subject.

Baghdādī's (+ A.H.429; A.D.1037) 'Farq', Ibn Ḥazm's (+ A.H. 1064) 'Al-Fasl fi-l-Milal', and Shahrastānī's (+ A.H.548; A.D.1153) 'Milal' are of particular value for the history of the early Shi'ites and their various sects. Sam'ānī's (+ A.H.562; A.D.1166-67) 'Ansāb, is a genealogical and Geographical work of great value to students of Muslim history.

Of the Ayyūbid period (A.H.567-648; A.D.1171-1250) Yāqūt's 'Mu'jamu-l-Buldān' (+ A.H.626; A.D.1229) and 'Marāḥid', and Ibnu-l-Athīr's 'Al-Kamil fi-t-Tārīkh' (+ A.H.630; A.D.1234) are valuable sources.

The literature of the Mameluke period (A.H.648-923; A.D.1250-1517) provides much precious material on the Fāṭimid Khilāfah. Among the well-known works belonging to this period



is Husāmu-d-Dīn Al-Mahallī's (+ A.H.652; A.D.1254) 'Al-Hādā' iqu-l-Wardiyyah', A MS. in the British Museum, Or. 3786, deals chiefly with the Zaydī Imāms but gives information also regarding Shī'ite history in general.

'Mir'ātu-z-Zamān' or 'The Mirror of the Times' by Sibt b. Al-Jawzī (+ A.H.654; A.D.1257) the grandson of the eminent doctor, Abu-l-Faraj 'Abdu-r-Rahmān b. Al-Jawzī (+ A.H.597; A.D.1200-1). Of the works of the former I have consulted the two MSS. Nos. 1505 and 1506 in the Bibliothèque Nationale; of the latter I have consulted MS.551 in the Royal Library, Cairo.

Sharafu-d-Dīn Al-Hadawī's (+ A.H. 670; A.D.1271-72) 'Anwāru-l-Yaqīn', a MS. No.3868 in the British Museum, deals with the Zaydī Imāms and is written in support of 'Alī and his descendants and their claims to the imāmah.

Ibn Muyassar's (+ A.H.677; A.D. 1278) 'Annals of Egypt' is one of the greatest works on the Fātimid period, and is generally quoted by such historians as Suyūṭī, Maqrīzī, and Abu'l-Mahāsīn. But only the second part of this valuable work has been published from the unique MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

Among other works are Ibn Khallikan's (+ A.H.681; A.D.1281) 'Wafayāt', "one of the most characteristic, instructive, and interesting works in Arabic Literature" (Prof. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, p.473) which has been of immense value throughout my dissertation and Ibn Wāsil's (+ A.H.697; A.D.1297-98) 'Mufarriju'l-Kurūb' (i.e. A treatise which dissipates anxiety), a MS. in the Bibliothèque Nationale, No.1702, has furnished me with new facts, in the account of the Fātimid propaganda in the royal palace. The epitome of Universal history of Abu-l-Fidā, (+ A.H.732; A.D.1331), Prince of Ḥamāh; Nuwayrī's (+ A.H.733; A.D.1332) 'Nihāyatu'l Arab



fi-Funūnī'l-'Arab', an encyclopedia of immense value (Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.1576); Ibn Khaldūn's (+ A.H.808; A.D.1405-6) 'History' and 'Prolegomena', Qalqashandī's (+ A.H.821; A.D.1418) 'Subhu'l-A'shā'; Ibn Hajar's (of Ascalon + A.H.849; A.D.1449) 'Isābah', and Abu'l-Mahāsīn's (+ A.H.874; A.D.1469) 'Annals' are also among the great works belonging to this period.

Perhaps among the most famous of these authors is Taqiyyu-d-Dīn Al-Maqrīzī (+ A.H.845; A.D.1441), a native of Cairo who claimed descent from the Fātimids. He devoted himself to Egyptian history and antiquities on which subject he composed several standard works such as the 'Khitāṭ', which I have found of much use, 'Itti'āz', a most valuable source for early Fātimid history up to the death of Al-Mu'izz, 'Muqaffā', a biographical dictionary of immense value, various parts of which exist in different libraries. I had the opportunity of consulting one part of this work in the Bibliothèque Nationale, No.2144 and three other parts in Leyden, No.1356, all of which have supplied me with valuable informations. Other works of Maqrīzī such as the 'Sulūq', Bibliothèque Nationale, MS.1726 is of great importance to students of the Mameluke period.

Other sources will be given in my list of the works consulted. Having thus arranged the authors according to the chronological order, we will now proceed to arrange them according to the alphabetical order for purposes of reference:

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## Chapter I.

### Shī'ite Propaganda to the Rise of the

### Fātimid Dynasty.

#### 1. Shī'ite Secret Propaganda during the Orthodox Khilāfah, *reign of the first four Khalifahs.*

In dealing with the history of the Shī'ah sect, it is necessary to trace in brief outline the history of the Shī'ites, or 'Alids, or Ahlu-l-Bayt, as they were called from early times, up to the establishment of their rule in Qayrawān.

The 'Alids, i.e. descendants of Fātimah, the Prophet's daughter, and 'Alī, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, were recognised by their supporters and adherents as the only lawful successors of the Prophet, while the <sup>first</sup> three Orthodox khilāfahs, Abū Bakr, 'Umar, and Uthmān, as well as the Umayyads and the Abbāsids, were considered to be usurpers of 'Alī's sacred rights and claims. Shī'ite historians and learned doctors have filled volumes in defence of these doctrines, and in advocating the conclusion: "that the khilāfah had been wrested from the house of 'Alī, or in other words, from that of the Prophet."

Their extremists (ghulāh), who have raised their imāms (descendants of 'Alī) above the degrees of created beings, and have attributed to them divine qualities hold that all other sects, even some branches of their own, are heretics. They maintained that 'Alī had been the first male to embrace Islām, and that his services to the Faith could not be reached by any other Muslim, except the Prophet.

They have spread and expounded such traditions of the Prophet as bear witness to the sacredness of 'Alī's cause and



his just claim to the khilāfah after the Prophet. "Whoever from his heart receives me as his master," these words the Prophet is reported to have said to 'Alī, "then let him receive 'Alī, O Lord! befriend those who befriend 'Alī, and be the enemy of those who are his enemies, help those who help him, and frustrate the hopes of those who betray him,"<sup>(1)</sup> and "Your relation to me is like that of Hārūn to Mūsā, but there will be no prophet after me."<sup>(2)</sup>

These two traditions clearly indicate 'Alī's preference and priority over all Muslims, and if they had been really uttered by the Prophet, 'Alī's cause might have gained ground in spite of Abū Bakr's election, for 'Alī's close relation to the Prophet, which the latter had described as that of Hārūn to Mūsā, must have paved the way to the khilāfah for 'Alī in the eyes of the Muslims.

(1) This tradition (hadīth) is reported by Shī'ite sources as having been uttered by the Prophet on the 12th of Dhū-l-Hijjah, the 10th year of the Hijrah, which is called "The Year of the Farewell" (Ḥajjatu-l-Wadā'), in which the Prophet made his last pilgrimage and bade adieu to Mecca. He halted at Ghadīr Khumm (the pond of Khumm), a place lying between Mecca and Madīnah, and adopted 'Alī Ibn Abī Talib as his brother. Since that date, the 12th Dhū-l-Hijjah has become the anniversary of the so-called "Festival of Ghadīr Khumm," to which the Shī'ites attach great importance - Sharafu-d-Dīn Al-Hadawī, B.M. Or. 3868, fol. 331; Ibn Khallikān, II. 136; Maqrīṣī (Khitāṭ, I.388).

(2) This tradition is connected with the setting out of the Prophet for Tabūk, lying twelve leagues far from Madīnah, (Yāqūt, Buldān, s.v.), when he appointed 'Alī as his deputy in Madīnah. This appointment is said to have caused dissatisfaction and jealousy among the citizens, so 'Alī followed the Prophet on his way to Tabūk and complained to him of what had happened and declined to return to his place. The Prophet, however, said to him, "My brother, go back to your place, for Madīnah cannot be well-handled except by you لا تصح إلا بك. You are my khaliṭfah (successor) in my family, in the home of my flight (meaning Madīnah which was called Dārū-l-Hijrah), and in my people. Are you not pleased that your relation to me is like that of Hārūn to Mūsā - but there will be no prophet after me?" Yaqūb b. Al-Ḥusayn, Univers.Lib.Leyden, Ms.1647, fol.65 seq.



In spite of the furious disagreement between Al-Muhājirīn (the Immigrants) and Al-Anṣār (the Supporters) in the hall (Ṣaḳīfah) of the Banū Sā'idah in Madīnah on the question of the succession, Abū Bakr was elected in the democratic manner familiar to the Arabs in the pre-Islamic period under the old tribal regime : that of the Patriarchal State. The prudent policy of the first two Khalīfahs, Abū Bakr and 'Umar, held the Arabs in check. But the policy, which 'Uthmān followed with regard to his kinsmen, resulted in a revulsion of feeling, from all Arab dominions, and gave the supporters of 'Alī an opportunity of transferring the Khilāfah to the Ahl-l-Bayt. This revulsion of feeling was fomented and fostered by Abū Dharru-l-Ghifārī, one of the old 'Companions' of the Prophet, who was reported to have been the first person who greeted the Prophet with the Islamic greeting,<sup>(1)</sup> and to have been the fourth (or fifth according to another account of Tabarī (III.1168) who embraced Islām,<sup>(2)</sup> and was highly honoured for his piety, and was one of the best traditionists of Islām.<sup>(3)</sup>

It was due to the instigation of another person that Abū Dharr's ascetic tendencies were aroused. When Ibn Sabā (also called Ibnū-s-Sawdā', to whose achievements reference will be made later, arrived in Syria, states Tabarī, he met Abū Dharr and expressed his dissatisfaction at Mu'āwiyah's policy in respect of the payments due to the Muslims in these words : "Are you not surprised at Mu'āwiyah who says", 'Riches belong to God, yet everything is God's, as if he wishes to conceal

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(1) Muslim, Ṣaḥīḥ, VII. 154.

(2) Tabarī, III. 1168.

(3) Ibid, V. 2859.



it from the Muslims and blot out the names of Muslims (from the lists of payments)" ? These words exercised so great effect on Abū Dharr's mind that he at once embarked upon the scheme of a propaganda; he called on the rich to pity the poor, and in his opinion, Mu'āwiyah was held responsible, and was regarded and referred to as an infidel. (1)

The feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of Abū Dharr gained to his side a large number of the poor class, who molested the rich so much that they complained to Mu'āwiyah, who reported the case to 'Uthmān and referred to his situation as having become embarrassed through Abū Dharr's action ( *إن الأمارت قد اضطربت* ). 'Uthmān could not fail to recognise that 'revolt had actually begun', and ordered Abū Dharr to be sent to Madīnah. But the latter was bent on acts of violence. On arriving in Madīnah he prophesied to a gathering what was going to happen. "Announce to the natives of Madīnah the tidings of an outspreading attack and a memorable war" were his words foreboding 'Uthmān's murder. (2)

Abū Dharr obtained the Khalīfah's permission to settle in Ar-Rabadhah, in the neighbourhood of Madīnah, whither he had retired as an exile, according to Ibn Ishāq. But Abū Dharr continued his attacks with vehemence until he died in A.H. 31 (Tabarī, II.289), and, according to another account of the same author, his death took place in A.H. 32. (3)

(1) Tabarī, V. 2859.

(2) Tabarī, V. 2859.

(3) Tabarī's accounts are quite vague. He puts the death of Abū Dharr in A.H. 32, and states that it took place in A.H. 31 (V. 2896). In another place (V. 2898), he refers to this incident to have occurred in A.H. 31.



Ibn Sabā, the instigator of this hostile feeling towards 'Uthmān, now found the way paved before him. Abū Dharr's attitude was of a purely religious nature, and his good intention could not be doubted. But, on the other hand, Ibn Sabā's attitude was of quite a different nature, and Van Vloten is right in his assertion that the tendencies of the people in the Arab provinces, particularly in Kūfah, Basrah, and Egypt were of a political nature based on religious speculations (poursuivent d'abord un but purement politique, quoique sous une apparence religieuse).<sup>(1)</sup>

'Abd-ullāh b. Sabā, the Hīmyarīte, was formerly a Jew, who embraced Islām in the seventh year of 'Uthmān's reign, that is to say, in A.H. 29 or 30. Soon after embracing Islām, Ibn Sabā distinguished himself as a dissenter,<sup>(2)</sup> and his career made Arab historians believe that he only outwardly professed Islām in order to deceive its adherents, and that he was the main factor in instigating the people against 'Uthmān. In Syria, Ibn Sabā met a number of other influential persons, whom he tried to gain to his side, but they rejected him. Of these, 'Ubāyda b. As-Sāmīt, one of the 'Companions', drove him to Mu'āwiyah and said to the latter, "By God ! this (Ibn Sabā) is he who has set Abū Dharr upon you."<sup>(3)</sup>

That Abū Dharr or Ibn Sabā was the originator of Shī'ism in Islām, is a matter of considerable debate among historians. But this is not the place to enter into details. We may,

(1) Van Vloten, *La Domination Arabe, Le Chiitisme et les Croyances Messianiques*, p. 34.

(2) Tabarī, II. 327, 3V. 2942.

(3) Tabarī, V. 2859.



however, state that Ibn Sabā was the instigator of Shi'ism and that Abū Dharr, though his protests did not imply an endeavour to transfer the khilāfah to 'Alī, was the originator of it, for he laid the foundation of a hostile feeling against 'Uthmān, which ultimately led to his murder and to the election of 'Alī and the coming into existence of a powerful 'Alid party.

#### Feeling of resentment in Arab Dominions:

From the beginning of 'Uthmān's term of office, a feeling of resentment in the Arab dominions was created by the fact that the people were overburdened with taxes.

In Bagrah, Ibn Sabā's instigation gained ground; he was greatly honoured, but was ordered to be driven out of this dominion, whence he went to Kūfah. <sup>(1)</sup>

In Kūfah, Ibn Sabā found among the people a strong anti-'Uthmānite feeling of a political nature: the settlers of Quraish were disliked for getting hold of the greater part of their Sawād (country), meetings were held in the homes of the rioters and the khaliḥah and the governor were both publicly reviled. <sup>(2)</sup>

#### In Egypt.

Ibn Sabā came in close contact with the rioters in Bagrah and Kufah by means of regular correspondence, as well as by interchange of envoys. <sup>(3)</sup> From this time he boldly advocated the cause of 'Alī. He then dispatched his envoys, who received the title of 'du'ān', whose duty it was to propagate, with the

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(1) Tabarī, VI. 2922. Tabarī states that this took place three years after 'Ibn Amir had assumed his office. The assumption took place in A.H. 29 (V. 2822) and this fixes the year in A.H. 32 (Ibid, V. 2922).

(2) Tabarī, VI. 2916 seq.

(3) Ibid, VI. 2922 seq.



support of the leaders in Bagrah and Kūfah, the Shī'ite cause, and revile the rule of 'Uthmān and his governors. (1)

Ibn Sabī' thus succeeded in laying the foundation of Shī'ism. He also originated what we term as Al-Ghaybah (concealment) and Ar-Raj'ah (return), and such belief implies what is termed as the Tanāsukhu-l-Arwāp (transmigration of souls). But this was not all. Ibn Sabī' compared Muḥammad with Jesus and expressed his belief in the raj'ah of Muḥammad, and supported his view by referring to the verse in the Qur'an (He Who has made the Qur'an binding on you will bring you back to the place of return)

(2) Ibn Sabī' then initiated the people into the wiṣāyah of 'Alī as being the sole heir of Muḥammad, and condemned those who aggressed 'Alī and violated his rights, and lastly, he said to them, " 'Uthmān has assumed the khilāfah in the life of the Prophet's lawful heir, 'Alī. You should, therefore, get ready and rouse opposition by reviling your amīr. Enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, so that you may gain the people to your side; and try to persuade them to believe in this cause." (3)

Ibn Sabī' s scheme was now an easy one, for the situation in Egypt, where an anti hostile feeling towards 'Uthmān and his governor, 'Abd-ullāh b. Sa'd b. Abū Saḥp, one of 'Uthmān's relatives, had already taken root. The feeling of resentment was fostered and fomented by two more potent factors, i.e. Muḥammad b. Abū Hudhayfah and Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr, who both greatly facilitated Ibn Sabī' s project.

(1) Ibid, VI. 2942.

(2) Qur'an XXVII. 85.

(3) Ibid, VI. 2942.



The beginning of the hostile attitude of Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah is connected with his fighting under Ibn Abī Sarḥ in the great battle of the Thātu-s-Sawārī against the Byzantines in A.H. 31 (A.D. 651).

Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥudhayfah and Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr both went to Egypt, and there they joined Ibn Sabī. Maqrīzī has supplied us with the cause of Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah's hostile feeling towards 'Uthmān. This author states that Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah was brought up by 'Uthmān after his father's death and that he was once accused of drinking. When 'Uthmān assumed the khilāfah, Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah appealed to be entrusted with the direction of some state affair, and this 'Uthmān refused him. <sup>(1)</sup>

The same author has also supplied us with a useful account of Ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah's career in Egypt. "In Shawwāl", A.H. 35 (A.D. 656) (the year in which 'Uthmān was assassinated), says Maqrīzī, "Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥudhayfah revolted against 'Uqbah b. 'Nafi', the acting governor of Egypt for 'Abd-ullāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ, and drove him out of the Fuṣṭāṭ, and demanded that 'Uthmān should be dethroned. The revolt spread all over Egypt وأسفر البلاد. He composed letters and showed that they had been dictated by the wives of the Prophet. Then he reduced some camels to a lean condition and ordered some men to stay for a time at the top of houses and face the sun, so that it might tan their skin and make them look like travellers who had been on a long journey.

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(1) Maqrīzī, Muqaffā, Univers. Lib., Leyden, MS. 1366, vol. I. fol. 206.



He afterwards ordered these men to go to the Cairo-Madīnah route, and dispatched messengers whose duty it was to tell the people about their arrival, so that they might go out and receive them. According to Ibn Abī Hudhayfah's instructions, these men, supposed to have arrived from Madīnah, were to say to the people who received them, "We have no news, the news is in the letters." The people then gathered in the mosque where Ibn Abī Hudhayfah read to them the (false) letters of the Prophet's wives."

انتبر محمد بن أبي حذيفة في شوال سنة خمس وثلاثين على عقبه  
ابن عامر ، خليفة ابن أبي سرح ، وأخرجه من القسطنطينية ،  
ودعا إلى خلع عثمان ، من البلاد ، وأشعر البلاد ، فكان  
يكتب الكتب على لسان أزواج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم ، ثم  
ياخذ الرواحل فيضمها ، والرجال فيجعلهم على ظهور البيوت ،  
فليستقبلون بوجوههم الشمس ، لتلوث حشمهم تلويح المسافرين ،  
ثم يأمرهم أن يخرجوا إلى طريق المدينة ومصر ، ثم يرسلون رسلًا يخبرون  
بهم الناس ليلقوهم . وقد أمرهم إذا لقيهم الناس أن يقولوا : ليس عندنا  
خبر ، الخبر في الكتب . ثم يلقاهم ابن أبي حذيفة ، فيقرأ عليهم كتب  
(1) أزواج النبي .

In spite of Uthmān's endeavour to reconcile him, Ibn Abī Hudhayfah was bent on continuing his acts of violence. He sent him 30,000 dirhams (about 833 dinārs) and a robe. This grant, however, gave Ibn Abī Hudhayfah an opportunity of showing his supporters that his movement was purely religious and void of any mundane object. He put Uthmān's grant in the mosque and addressed the people in these words: "You Muslims! Do you not see that Uthmān misleads me in my

(1) Ibid, vol. I. fol. 205 b.



religion and bribes me for it?" "Ibn Abī Hudhayfah's esteem," adds Maqrīzī, "greatly increased in the hearts of the people, who reviled 'Uthmān and elected Ibn Abī Hudhayfah their leader."<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) فكتب ابن أبي سرح إلى عثمان بذلك ما فأرسل إلى ابن أبي حذيفة ثلاثين ألف درهم وكسوه ما فوضع ذلك في المسجد وقال: يا معشر المسلمين، ألا ترون أن عثمان يخافني عن ديني ما ويرشيني عليه؟ فأنزاد أهل مصر تعظيما له ما وطعنوا على عثمان ما وبايعوه على رياستهم<sup>(2)</sup>

The situation in Basrah, Kūfah, and Egypt was, indeed, critical. 'Uthmān dispatched three men whose duty it was to examine and report on the causes of the trouble. 'Ammār b. Yāsir, one of the 'Companions', who had embraced Islām at an early date, and whose faith the Prophet had greatly appreciated,<sup>(3)</sup> was sent to Egypt. The two other envoys returned to Madīnah, while 'Ammār, on the other hand, remained in Egypt and took part in the revolt.<sup>(4)</sup>

The joining of such an eminent 'Companion' as 'Ammār explains the extent of resentment which 'Uthmān's feeble policy had procured.

The feeling of dislike towards 'Uthmān and the governors who were his relatives had thus taken root in Egypt through the efforts of Ibn Sabā who had so successfully gained to his side such influential men as Muḥammad b. Abī Hudhayfah, Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr, and 'Ammār b. Yāsir. He also agreed

(1) This incident occurred before Ibn Abī Sarp left Egypt, probably on a mission or leave, and entrusted 'Uqbah with the direct of the affairs of this province.

(2) Ibid, vol. I, fol. 206.

(3) According to Ibn Hajar (Isābah IV. 1220), the Prophet said, "Follow the example of Abū Bakr and Umar, and take as your guide 'Ammār (b Yāsir).

(4) Tabarī, VI. 2943-4.



with the leaders of Bagrah and Kūfah to meet in Madīnah.<sup>(1)</sup>  
 There they assembled. But as to the man on whom the election would fall, the tendencies of the various leaders were not in agreement. The tendency of the leaders of Bagrah was in favour of Ṭalhah, that of Kūfah was in favour of Az-Zubair, while that of Ibn Sabā and his partisans, was directed towards 'Alī, and each of the three parties was bent on putting into execution its own aim.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Sabā'ites, however, were successful, and the murder of 'Uthmān (18th Dhū-l-Hijjah, A.H.35; A.D. 655) and the election of 'Alī (Friday, five days before the end of Dhū-l-Hijjah, A.H.35) terminated the first part of the conflict, and marked the establishment of what we term Shī'ism in Islām, as distinguished from the other hostile party, i.e. the Sunnites.

#### Ibn Sabā's Shī'ite Doctrines:

##### Divinity of 'Alī:

Now we turn to Ibn Sabā's career from the point of view of the development of his Shī'ite doctrines during and after the Khilāfah of 'Alī.

Ibn Ḥazm states that certain persons among the adherents of Ibn Sabā came to 'Alī and said to his face: "Thou art he!" 'Alī asked them: "Who is he?" and they answered: "Thou art Allāh." 'Alī took the matter very seriously. He gave orders for a fire to be kindled and burned them in it. While they were being thrown into the fire, they started shouting, "Now we feel certain that he is Allāh, for no one but Allāh punishes

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(1) Ibid, VI. 3950.

(2) Ibid, VI. 3955.



by fire." Regarding this incident 'Alī said, "When I saw that the matter became an illegal matter, I kindled a fire and called for Qunbar."<sup>(1)</sup>

As a result of his extravagant doctrines, Ibn Sabā was banished to Madā'in.<sup>(2)</sup> However, these actions of 'Alī against Ibn Sabā and his followers had no effect on the latter's belief in the 'Alīd cause. After 'Alī's death the Sabā'iyyah believed in the Ghaybah, in the ray'ah, and in the Tawaqquf (the waiting of his return) of 'Alī,<sup>(3)</sup> and believed that a part of Divinity was incarnated in him. Those who believed in 'Alī's return added that he was in the clouds, that his voice was heard, and his whip was in the lightning, and that he would appear again and fill the earth with justice as it had before been filled with iniquity.<sup>(4)</sup>

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(1) The nawlā of 'Alī who threw them into the fire. Ibn Hazzam, IV. 186.

(2) Shahrestānī, II. 11; 'Iqd, I. 269.

(3) When Ibn Sabā was told that 'Alī had died, he said, "Even if you had brought us his brains seventy times (according to another account in seventy bags: *فيسبعون*; the words *فيسبعون*; bag and *فيسبعون*; time differ very slightly in autography), we would not be convinced of his death. He will surely not die until he has filled the earth with justice after it has been filled with iniquity" (Ibn Hazzam, IV. 180).

(4) Shahrestānī, II. 11.



## 8. Hashimite Secret Propaganda during the

### Umayyad Dynasty.

Mu'awiyah attained the khilāfah partly by the sword, partly by intrigue and diplomacy, not by election and general consent. On his father's death, Al-Hasan was nominated to the khilāfah. His term of office, however, was short lived.<sup>(1)</sup> His troops were defeated by the Syrians, and finding himself deserted by his own supporters in 'Irāq, he abdicated "in order to put an end to the shedding of blood among the Muslims." The real cause, however, as Ya'qubī states (II. 255), was, that Al-Hasan could no longer hold his own against Mu'awiyah.

A charter embodying the terms of peace was concluded between Al-Hasan and Mu'awiyah, and, by virtue of this treaty, the latter became the absolute master of the Arab Empire, and, five days before the end of Rabī' (?), A.H. 41, Mu'awiyah entered Kūfah.<sup>(2)</sup>

The messages,<sup>(3)</sup> which Al-Husayn had received from the leaders of the Kūfites, were urgent enough to induce him to set out for Kūfah. On 9th Muharram, A.H. 61 (A.D. 680), Al-Husayn fought at the head of a scanty number of less than eighty men, and, on 10th Muharram of the same year, he and his party were killed to the last man.

(1) According to Mas'ūdī (Murūj, II. 51), 'Alī died on 20th Ramaḡān A.H. 40 (A.D. 660). <sup>at Kūfah</sup> He was installed in his office for about five months until he abdicated on 1st Rabī' (?) (Mas'ūdī's account does not indicate whether this month was Rabī' I or Rabī' II.) A.H. 41 (A.D. 660). Yahyā b. Al-Husayn, Univers. Lib., Leyden, Ms. 1974, fol. 6.

(2) Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II. 36.

(3) Al-Husayn received about 150 messages from different parties (Leyden, Ms. 1979, fol. 12 b; Leyden, Ms. 1647, fol. 145) during the month of Dhū-l-Hijjah, A.H. 60; A.D. 680, Yahyā b. Al-Husayn, Univers. Lib., Leyden, Ms. 1979, fol. 8.).



"The Shī'ah, or the Faction of Alī," says Professor Browne, "had, as we have seen, been sadly lacking in enthusiasm and self-devotion; but henceforth all this was changed, and a reminder of the blood-stained field of Kerbelā, where the grandson of the Apostle of God fell at length, tortured by thirst, and surrounded by the bodies of his murdered kinsmen, has been at any time since then sufficient to evoke, even in the most lukewarm and heedless, the deepest emotion, the most frantic grief, and an exaltation of the spirit before which pain, danger, and death shrink to unconsidered trifles."<sup>(1)</sup>

This passage accurately describes the situation. The death of Al-Ḥusayn and the defeat of his men did not terminate the struggle between the two parties. On the other hand, it gained more supporters to the 'Alid cause, and hostility between the Umayyads and the 'Alids became more lively and formidable. Upon the death of Al-Ḥusayn, Ibn Ziyād, the amīr of Kūfah, ascended the minbar and addressed the people in these words: "Praise, be to God Who has revealed the Truth and its supporters, and granted victory to the Commander of the Faithful, Yazīd, and his party, and killed the Pretender, the son of the Pretender, and his party."

#### Ibnu-z-Zubair and Ibnu-l-Ḥanafīyyah:

'Abd-ullāh b. Az-Zubair set up a claim to the khilāfah, and his cause gained ground both in Arabia and in 'Irāq. The refusal of Muḥammad b. Al-Ḥanafīyyah to adopt the cause of Ibn Az-Zubair, frustrated the attempts of the latter. More important than this was the rise of the Kayṣāniyyah sect which

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(1) Browne, A Literary History of Persia, p. 226 seq.



promulgated the right of Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah to the khilāfah after the death of his brother, Al-Ḥusayn. But neither of the two Shī'ites encouraged Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah to lay claim to the khilāfah.

Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah's career is rather remarkable. He took the oath to Yazīd when his father nominated him as his successor. When Yazīd ascended the throne, he invited Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah to Damascus and received him with the highest marks of honour. Before his return to Madīnah, he received 300,000 dirhams ( $833\frac{1}{3}$  dīnār), or, according to another account of the same author, 500,000 dirhams (15688 dīnārs), and robes to the value of 100,000 dirhams (2777 dinars).<sup>(1)</sup>

#### Al-Mukhtār and the Kaysāniyyah<sup>(2)</sup>

Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah's refusal to adhere to Ibnu-r-Zubair's cause had weakened the cause of the latter and gave Al-Mukhtār an opportunity of forming a new Shī'ite sect, that of the Kaysāniyyah. Nor did Al-Mukhtār's endeavours win the sympathy of Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah, since he had no confidence in the people of Kūfah for what they had done to his father and brothers.<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Maqrīzī, Maqaffā, Univers. Lib., Leyden, Ms. 1566, vol. II. 127 b.

(2) The origin of the Kaysāniyyah is connected by Tabarī with Kaysān, a nawlā of 'Alī, who had fallen while defending his master in the battle of Siffin (VI. 5098). According to Mas'ūdī, the Kaysāniyyah sect is connected with Al-Mukhtār b. 'Abī 'Ubayd Ath-Thaqafī, whose name was Kaysān, and whose kunyah, Abū 'Umayr (Madrīj, II. 73). Mas'ūdī's explanation, is not final for he himself throws doubt on the matter by adding "or (the name may be connected with) another person other than Al-Mukhtār (Ibid, II. 73). On the other hand, the explanation of the name by Ibn 'Abdī Rabbih ('Iqd, I. 260) implies that the Kaysāniyyah were the followers of Al-Mukhtār, who was also named Kaysān. This explanation, however, is contradicted



## The rebellion of Al-Mukhtār took place during the

by Shahrastānī, who distinguishes between the Kaysāniyyah, which sect is, according to this author, derived from Kaysān, the nawī of 'Alī (I.196) and the Mukhtāriyyah, the supporters of Al-Mukhtār (I.197), and Ibn Ḥazm who very plainly distinguishes between Al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd and Kaysān Abū 'Umrah (IV.94). Baghdādī asserts that Al-Mukhtār was named Kaysān after 'Alī's nawī (Farq, p.27). Ahmad b. Yahyā Al-Murtaḍī states that Kaysān was a nawī of the Banū Nakhīlah <sup>خيل</sup> in Kūfah, (this word is incorrectly copied for Bajīlah <sup>جيلة</sup>). See Sam'ānī, Ansāb, page 66 seq., and Ibn Sa'd, Tabaqāt, II. 72, and Dīnawarī, p. 297). (Al-Bahru-z-Zakhkhār, B.M. Or. 3772, fol. 137), and this latter statement is in accordance with that of Ṭabarī (II.671) and Ibn Sa'd (Ṭabaqāt, II.72). Al-Murtaḍī's statement, however, is not decisive, for, like Ṭabarī (VI. 3295), he adds that the word Kaysān is said to have been connected with that of the nawī of 'Alī. But, on the other hand, he agrees with Mas'ūdī (Murūj, II. 73) and Baghdādī (p. 27) that Kaysān was Al-Mukhtār himself.

In another place, Ṭabarī states that Abū 'Umrah was the chief of Al-Mukhtār's bodyguard (II.671). This "Abū 'Umrah Kaysān," a nawī of Bajīlah, is declared by Ibn Sa'd to have been among Al-Mukhtār's supporters, and the name of "Abū 'Umrah" is mentioned by the same author among those of other men who bore witness that Al-Mukhtār had been authorized by Imn-l-Ḥanafīyyah to advocate the claim of the latter to the Khilāfah (Ṭabaqāt, II.72) which fact is, as had been shown above, doubtful. Again, Dīnawarī (Al-Akhbār-t-Tiwāl, p.297) has furnished us with an account of Al-Mukhtār and Kaysān, as two different personalities. "I was one of those who entered in his (Al-Mukhtār's) presence," relates Ash-Sha'bi, on whose authority Dīnawarī quotes this account, "he (Al-Mukhtār) said to us, 'Let us go to Ibrūhīm b. Al-Ashtar.' Then we went in his company which consisted of myself, Yazīd b. Anas, Aḥmar b. Sulayt, 'Abd-ullāh b. Kāmil, Abū 'Umrah (the word had a fathaḥ on the f) Kaysān, a nawī of the Banū Bajīlah who afterwards adhered to Al-Mukhtār's cause."

In his Commentary on the "Heterodoxies of the Shī'ites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm" (Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol.29, pages 34-35), Friedlaender has attempted to solve the question of the 'origin of the kaysāniyyah.' Apart from the fact that he has quoted Ibn Sa'd in other places, this author asserts that "Ibn Ḥazm's explanation, though brief, is undoubtedly the only true correct one among the numerous historians." Ibn Ḥazm, however, states that "the kaysāniyyah were the followers of Al-Mukhtār b. Abī 'Ubayd," (IV.179) which does not indicate that this sect derived its name from that of Al-Mukhtār, for, it is obvious that, from the philological point of view, there is no connection whatsoever between 'Al-Mukhtār' and the 'Kaysāniyyah,' which word is most probably related to Kaysān, the nawī of the Banū Bajīlah and the chief of Al-Mukhtār's bodyguard. Moreover, as had been shown, Ibn Ḥazm's distinction of the two names is made clear when he refers to the Kaysāniyyah sect in his account of the Twelfth Imām: "The chiefs



khilāfah of 'Abdu-l-Malik (A.H. 65-66; A.D. 664-704). "The

doctrine of the Sabā'īyyah," says Van Vloten, "seems to have been based on the old idea of the incarnation of divinity."

(the sing. is used - which does not give the correct meaning from the grammatical point of view) were Al-Mukhtār b. Abi 'Ubayd, Kaysān Abū 'Umarah, and other persons (in addition to these two) ...." IV.94. The explanation of Ibn Sa'd and Dinawari are, therefore, the correct ones.

(3) Maqrīzī adds that a party of Syrians under Muslim b. 'Uqbah of the Banū Murrah were dispatched to fight against Ibnu-s-Zubair. A party under Abd-ullāh b. Muṭī' (the amir of Ibnu-s-Zubair in Kūfah, and 'Abd-ullāh b. 'Umar (the second Orthodox Khalīfah) came to Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah and said to him, "Go out with us and fight against Yazid." "For what reason shall I fight against him?" answered Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah. "He has become an infidel ..he drinks wine...." said they. "Do you not fear God?" said Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah. "Has any one of you seen him do what you mention? I have associated with him more than you have, yet I have not found any evil in him?" "He did not show you what he had done?" said they. "Has he told you about it?" was Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah's answer. Fearing that Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah's refusal might frustrate their plans, the party expressed its desire to nominate him, and this too was refused them. They said to him, "But you have fought on the side of your father." "Is there any one like my father today (to fight with him)?" said he. Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah was then forced to join the fight. A Syrian contingent attacked his side; his son, Al-Qāsim was killed by a Syrian whom Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah's second son, Abū Hāshim attacked and killed on the spot. Soon after this, Ibnu-l-Hanafiyyah returned to Mecca. (In Hijāz and Irāq)

فلما وثب الناس بنزير وقلمو ، وماوا لاسيد الله به الزبير ، وانا هم مسلميه  
عقبه المرتي في اهل الشام ما جاء لاسيد الله به عمر وعبد الله به مطيع ، وقالوا الحمد لله الحنفية  
أخرج معنا قاتل يزير . فقال : على ماذا اقاتله ولم اخلط ؟ قالوا : انه قد كفر ... وشرب  
الخمر ... فقال لهم : اني تتقوه الله وهل لاه احد منكم يفعل ما تذكرونه ، وقد محبت  
اكثرها محبتهم فاشرب منه سورا ؟ قالوا : انه لم يلم بطلمك في هذه . قال :  
افا طلمكم انتم عليه ؟ ... فافوا انه يثبط قعوده الناس في الخمر ، كما فضرنا عليه  
انه يباليو ، اذ نرى انه يباليع ابنه الزبير ، فقال : لست اقاتل تايبا او مستورا .  
قالوا : فقد قاتلت مع ابيك . قال : وانه مثل ابني اليوم ؟ فافضوه لارها ورسه  
بنوه . فالحمد ما فعل اهل الشام عليه ، فاضارب بنوه دونه ما فقتل ابنه  
الناهم محمد ، وضرب ابو هاشم محمد قاتل اخيه فقتله ، كما فخرج ابنه الحنفية لانه لم يوثق .  
فدع

(Maqrīzī, Muqaffā, Univers. Lib. Leyden, Ms. 1366 vol. II. fol. 120)



(Shahrastānī (II.12) states that these doctrines had originally been adopted by the Mazdakiyyah in Persia in the pre-Islamic period - during the 5th century A.D. - (the Brahmans in India, the ancient philosophers and the Ṣābeans). The Sabā'iyyah differs from the other Shī'īte sect, the Kaysāniyyah which appeared for the first time in Kūfah under the leadership of Al-Mukhtār.<sup>(1)</sup> Besides their cardinal doctrine, which implies the recognition of the imāmah of Muḥammad b. Al-Ḥanafiyyah after 'Alī, the Kaysāniyyah exaggerate the supernatural knowledge of Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah who is according to them, fully acquainted with all sciences (mystic knowledge)<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Kaysaniyyah believed in the Bad',<sup>(3)</sup> in the

(1) Van Vloten, *Recherches sur la Domination Arabe*,.....etc., p. 41, adopted from Van Gelder, *Mokhtār*, p. 82 suiv.

(2) This extravagant doctrine gave offence to Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah himself as well as to certain other Imāms. This statement is supported by Van Vloten who has good reason for his remark "On se demande quel accueil faisaient les imāms eux-mêmes aux théories extravagantes qu'ils avaient suscitées". (Ibid, p.44): 'Alī had denied the qualities which the Sabā'iyyah had attributed to him, and those who called him 'God' were burnt. 'Abd-ullāh b. Sabā himself was banished to Madā'in. 'Alī's son, Muḥammad, shared his father's sentiments. He condemned those who attributed to him the possession of mystic knowledge. Ibn Sa'd states that when Ibnu-l-Ḥanafiyyah was told of the Kaysāniyyah doctrines which implied that the House of the Prophet possessed mystic knowledge, he said, "By God! we have not inherited from the Prophet anything except what lies between these two covers (meaning the Qur'ān), yea and this paper *هذه* attached to the sheath of my sword" (Ṭabaqāt, V. 77).

(3) A section of them maintained that God sometimes wants a thing and decides upon it, then something occurs to Him, and He leaves it undone, which implies the mutability of the Divine Will, and is a counterpart of the Orthodox belief in Naakh (the abolition by God of a previous revealed law); the former doctrine is generally regarded as a specific tenet of the Kaysāniyyah. This belief is supposed to have been invented by Al-Mukhtār, when, contrary to his prophecies, he was defeated in battle. (Bagdādī, p.36; Shahrastānī, I. 198).



Tanāsukhu-l-Arwāh,<sup>(1)</sup> and in the Raġ'ah.<sup>(2)</sup> They also believed that 'Alī, Al-Ḥasan, Al-Ḥusayn, and Ibnu-l-Ḥanafīyyah were prophets. However, they do not agree whether Ibnu-l-Ḥanafīyyah inherited the imāmah directly from 'Alī, or indirectly through Al-Ḥasan and Al-Ḥusayn.

They also believe that religion implies obedience to one man, and this belief tempted them to the interpretation of the divine law. They consider that obedience to a certain man abrogates the necessity of adhering to the divine law, such as belief in the Day of Judgment, since they could learn from this man all the fundamental tenets of the religious law of the Muslim Faith, e.g. fasting, prayers, pilgrimage, etc.<sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) A section of the Kaysāniyyah also believed in the "Transmigration of Souls". Those who believed in it were so possessed of the idea that one of them would take a donkey or a mule and beat it and torture it and withhold from it drink and food on the ground that it bore the spirit of Abū Bakr and 'Umar, or that of 'A'ishah. (Ibn Ḥamm, IV. 182).

(2) A party of the Kaysāniyyah, stimulated by the mystery that surrounded Ibnu-l-Ḥanafīyyah's death, denied his death altogether, and believed that he was hidden in the Raġwā Mountains (situated at a distance of seven days' journey from Madīnah - Jāqūt - Buldān, s.v.), whence he would return'. "This belief found poetical expression through Kuthayyir and As-Sayyidū-l-Ḥimyarī, and became through them known as specially Kaysanic" (Friedlaender, Journal of the Oriental American Society, vol. 29, 35). There, Ibnu-l-Ḥanafīyyah derives his sustenance from two fountains, one of honey, the other of water, both flowing near him (Shahrestānī, I. 200).

(3) Shahrestānī, I. 196.



As to the imam according to the doctrines of the Sabā'iyyah and the Kaysaniyyah, Van Vloten says, "The Sabā'iyyah considered their imām to be divine by nature; while the Kaysāniyyah gave him obedience as a superior being possessed of supernatural knowledge." "Si les Sabā'ia considéraient leur imām comme un être divin par sa nature, les Kaisānia lui prêtait obéissance comme à un homme supérieur, possédant des connaissances surnaturelles".<sup>(1)</sup>

Such were Al-Mukhtār's Shī'ite doctrines. As regards his military career, he captured Kūfah, where he took summary vengeance on all who had been concerned in the massacre of Karbalā'. But the success of Al-Mukhtār was short lived. He was attacked by the generals of Ibnu-z-Zubair, defeated, and slain. ((Jumādā, II. 73; A.D. 692)). By the defeat of Ibnu-z-Zubair by Al-Hajjāj, who captured Mecca, and that of Al-Mukhtār at Kūfah A.H. 67 (A.D. 686), the Umayyad dynasty was again supreme over the whole Muslim realm.

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(1) Van Vloten, p. 42.

(1) Muḥṣinī (Muḥṣinī, *Ḥikma*, Lib. Bayan, N.S. 1345, vol. II, fol. 125 b.) states that this took place during the reign of Al-Walīd b. Abī-Muḥṣin, (A.H. 69-70; A.D. 705-714) which is obviously a mistake.

(2) *Ḥis. Ḥaf. Tawhīd*, VIII, 200.

(3) Muḥṣinī, *Muḥṣinī, Ḥikma*, Lib. Bayan, N.S. 1345, vol. II, fol. 125 b.



### 3. Abbāsid Secret Propaganda during the

#### Umayyad Dynasty:

We must now consider an incident in the history of the Shī'ah, namely the transference of the claim to the khilāfah from the house of 'Alī to the house of Al-'Abbās by Abū Hāshim b. Muḥammad b. Al-Ḥanafiyyah, which may be termed the "inheritance of the kaysāniyyah."

In A.H. 96 (A.D.718), Abū Hāshim died. Shortly before his death, he was received with honour by the Umayyad khalīfah, Sulaymān <sup>(1)</sup> b. 'Abdu-l-Malik (A.H. 96-99; A.D.714-717), but he plotted his death on his way to the province of Ash-Sharāḥ in which then resided Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd-ullāh b. Al-'Abbās in the village of Al-Ḥumaymah on the border of the northern Arab Desert. Feeling that his last hour had come, Abū Hāshim stopped at Al-Ḥumaymah, confided to Muḥammad b. 'Alī the secrets of the da'wah, introduced him to his agent (Chief Dā'ī) in Kūfah, and to the other da'āh (by means of letters by means of which he was able to communicate with them), and transferred to him his right to the khilāfah. He also instructed him that the promulgation of the da'wah should begin at the close of the year A.H.100 (A.D.718), and that on his death (of Muḥammad), his own right should pass to his son, Ibrāhīm. <sup>(2)</sup>   
 (3)   
 فَوُتِيَ (ابو هاشم) عنده (محمد بن عبد الله بن عباس) بالخيمه (أرضي)   
 إليه وقال: إني هذا أكره أن أكون أول من يتبعكم في ذلك فاحذروا

(1) Maqrīzī (Maqaffā, Univers. Lib. Leyden, M.S.1366, Vol.II. fol.136 b.) states that this took place during the reign of Al-Walīd b. 'Abdu-l-Malik, (A.H.86-88; A.D.705-714) which is obviously a mistake.

(2) Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, VIII. 356.

(3) Maqrīzī, Maqaffā, Univers. Lib. Leyden, M.S.1366, vol.II. fol.136 b.



Thus the right to the imārah passed over from the house of 'Alī to the house of Al-'Abbās by virtue of Abū Hāshim's bequest. In conformity with Abū Hāshim's instructions, the da'wah in the name of the 'Abbāsids began in A.H.100. Muhammad sent to the dā'īs copies of a letter indicating his line of action. <sup>(1)</sup>

The new Imām was aware of the tendencies which characterised the populations of the various Arab provinces. He cleverly described these tendencies in one of his addresses in these words "(The inhabitants of) Kūfah and its Sawād are 'Alī's partisans, those of Bagrah are 'Uthmāniyyah, who maintain neutrality, those of Mesopotamia are true Harūriyyah, <sup>(2)</sup> those of Syria know no one except Mu'āwiyah and (nothing except) obedience to the Banū Umayyah, those of Mecca and Madīnah believe only in Abū Bakr and 'Umar. You have, therefore, to turn your efforts towards Khurāsān. There, are found brave men of strong hearts unaffected by passions and not distracted by heterodoxies. There also is found an army of brave strong men, of huge stature, thick moustaches and beards, with tremendous voices which inspire terror and fear." <sup>(3)</sup>

"The choice of this particular province," says Van Vloten, "though not expressly indicated in the address of the Imām, was owing to the fact that these people (of Khurāsān), so strong and so formidable, had endured the worst possible

(1) Tabarī II. 1358.

(2) This word is derived from Harūrā', a village lying in the outskirts of Kūfah, in which the Khawārij settled after they had deserted 'Alī b. Abū Tālib, and hence they were called the Harūriyyah (or Khawārij) - Yāqūt's Mu'jam-l-Buldān, s.v.; <sup>Baghdādī</sup> Infarūjīnī, p.57.

(3) Muqaddasī, Ed. De Goeje, III. 293-94.



tyranny under the Umayyads". <sup>(1)</sup> Van Vloten has good reason for *this* remark. But more important still is the fact that the Khurāsānids, whose hearts were "not distracted by heterodoxies", to which the Imām attached great importance, would, undoubtedly, facilitate the spread of the Abbāsīd propaganda.

From Huzaymah, Muḥammad b. 'Alī, the Imām, dispatched his da'wā. Maysarah was sent to 'Irāq, and three other missionaries including 'Ikrimah As-Sarrāj, were entrusted with the da'wah in Khurāsān in the name of Muḥammad b. 'Alī and the members of his house. The missionaries visited Khurāsān under the pretence of commerce or pilgrimage (to Mecca), while in secret they devoted themselves to the promulgation of the Abbāsīd propaganda. In spite of flogging, crucifixion, and other punishments, the da'wā in Khurāsān succeeded in laying the foundation of the propaganda. Twelve naqībs (chiefs), assisted by fifty-eight other da'wā were selected by As-Sarrāj, <sup>(2)</sup> and the achievements of these men were of immense value. In A.H. 105 (A.D. 723), Maysarah died, and was succeeded by another influential dā'ī in the name of Bukayr b. Māhān. <sup>(3)</sup>

Although there were grounds for the opinion of Muḥammad b. 'Alī "that the hearts of the Khurāsānids were undivided by heterodoxies" yet there was in Khurāsān a party whose tendency towards the 'Alids showed itself. The activities of a man named Ghālib, an extreme devotee to the 'Alids, threatened the failure of the efforts of the Abbāsīd da'wā and led to an important modification in the presentation of the da'wah.

(1) Van Vloten, p. 48.

(2) Tabarī, II. 1358, and 1988. The number of missionaries was 70.

(3) Ibid, II. 1367.

(4) Ibid, II. 1367.

(5) Ibid, II. 1367.

(6) Ibid, II. 1367.



Ghālib's attitude having been reported to Muḥammad b. 'Alī, he sent in A.H.106 (A.D.724) Ziyād Abū Muḥammad, a nawī of the Banū Ḥamdān to Khurāsān and advised him to avoid Ghālib. But it was not possible for Ziyād to conform with his Imām's advice. Ghālib, having heard of the new dā'i's arrival, went to Marw, where a hostile debate between the two men could not be avoided, Ghālib advocating the rights of the house of 'Alī, while Ziyād supported the cause of the 'Abbāsids.<sup>(1)</sup> There is no historical record as to whether this incident led to any outbreak of hostilities between the two parties in Khurāsān.

This modification in the da'wah implied that the propaganda had in future to be made in the name of and 'Obedience to the family of Muḥammad' (Tabarī, II. 1993), that is the Ahlu-l-Bayt, which terms include both the houses of Hāshim, and it was only under strict secrecy that the da'wah was made in the name of the house of Al-'Abbās. The efforts of the da'wah were successful; a large number of influential persons, such as Sulaymān b. Kathīr and Abū Muslim, joined the da'wah.<sup>(2)</sup>

By the period of the death of Muḥammad b. 'Alī in A.H.125 (A.H.743), the 'Abbāsīd cause had gained considerable ground in Khurāsān, and, under his son, Ibrāhīm, military activity actually began. In A.H.128 (A.D.745), Abū Muslim was entrusted with the direction of affairs in Khurāsān.<sup>(3)</sup> The faction feuds which then existed between Muḍariyyah (or Yamāniyyah) and the Nizāriyyah, the fact that the governor of Khurāsān was insufficiently provided with troops, and the revolt of the Khawārij in Yemen and Ḥaḍramūt,<sup>(4)</sup> all these things taken together hastened the fall of the Umayyads.

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(1) Ibid, II. 1601-2.

(2) Ibid, II. 1727.

(3) Ibid, II. 1727.

(4) Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II. 145.



The secret intrigues of the 'Abbāsids, carried on with vigour and persistency, and their adroit management of the Shī'ah facilitated the propagandist activities of the supporters of the house of Al-'Abbās, under the leadership of Abū Muslim. At the close of the year A.H. 132 (A.D. 750), the black flag, the emblem of the 'Abbāsids, floated over the battlements of Damascus, and the Umayyad dynasty was blotted out with cruelty and bloodshed. The 'Alids, the Umayyads, and the Khawārij were equally the victims of the first 'Abbāsids Khalīfah, Abū-l-Abbās-a-Saffār (The Butcher).

(4) 'Alid Secret Propaganda during the 'Abbāsīd Dynasty:

But even after the 'Abbāsids had obtained the Khilāfah, the 'Alids would not abandon their own cause, but struggled without ceasing for its success. After the death of Al-Busayn, the 'Alids under stress of necessity devoted their ambitions particularly to the gaining of religious leadership, and, in virtue of this ambition, the Shī'ah history became a history of intrigue actuated by religion. Only on certain occasions, were the Shī'ites able to appear in the field of politics and appealed to the sword.

The rise of Zayd b. Al-Busayn b. 'Alī, to whom the Zaydiyyah branch of the Shī'ite sect trace their origin, is an example of this fact. In A.H. 132 (A.D. 740), Zayd organised an open rebellion against the Umayyad Khalīfah<sup>(1)</sup> (Mas'ūdī, Tanbīh, VIII. 323).

(1) According to Huwayrī (Bib. Nat. Ms. 1576, fol. 32 b), Hishām, the Umayyad Khalīfah, drove Zayd out of his audience-chamber after having insulted him. Zayd expressed his indignation by addressing Hishām in these words: I will go out, but my action will be such as you will not like أخرج زيدا كرهه لا يحبكم



But at the critical moment, the fickle character of the Kūfites again manifested itself. They withdrew from him, thus violating their oath of allegiance, and declared Ja'faru-ṣ-Ṣādiq to be their legitimate imām. <sup>(1)</sup> Zayd was thus left with a small party at the head of which he fought until he was killed. His body was burnt, beaten with staves until it was turned into ashes, and was then scattered to the winds.

(2) أَهْرَقَ بِالنَّارِ وَخَطَطَ بِالسَّيْفِ مِمَّا رَمَدَ

On the death of Zayd, the Zaydiyyah broke up into several sections. A party of these continued their adherence to the cause of Zayd, and under his son Yahyā, fought in Kharrāsān in A.H. 125 (A.D. 743); in that same year Yahyā was killed, his body crucified, burnt to ashes, and scattered to the winds.

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Muwayrī (Ibid, fol. 23) has quoted the words used by his adherents when taking the oath of fealty to him; the terms of it express their loyalty to the 'Alid cause and determination to fight against their enemies.

إِنَّا نَبْعُوكَ الْكِتَابَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسْنَهُ نَبِيَّةَ صَلَواتِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَحُجَّتَهُ  
الطَّالِمَةَ وَاعْطَاءَ الْمُحْرَمِيَّةِ وَتَقْسِيمَ هَذَا الْفَتْحِ بَيْنَ أَهْلِ السَّوَادِ  
أَشْيَا سِيرِهِ عَلَى زَيْدٍ ؟ ... فَإِنَّا قَالْنَا نَعَمْ مَسَّحَ بِهِ عَلَى يَدِهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ :  
اللَّهُمَّ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ فِيهِ يَوْمَ عَشْرِ الْفَا وَ قَتَلَ أَرْبَعِينَ الطَّاغُوتَ وَأَمْرًا صَحَابَةً  
بِالْإِسْقَادِ مَا قَاتَلَ بِهِ يَوْمَ يَفَى لَهُ وَخَرَجَ بِهِ ...

(1) According to Tabarī (II. 1699-1700) they received the name of rāfiḡah (deserters or violators). The origin of this word has been minutely investigated by Friedlaender (Journal of the Oriental American Society. vol. 29, pages 137-159) who says, "The generalisation of the word is probably the outcome of a more hostile attitude against the Shī'ites, and is consistently applied by certain writers (such as Baghdādī, Ibn Hama, and Shahrastānī) to all the sects of the Shī'ites without exception.

(2) Sharafu-d-Dīn Al-Hadawī, B.M. Or. 3868, fol. 114 b. seq.



### The Imāmiyyah and the Ismā'īliyyah:

But a large section of the Zaydiyyah joined the Imāmiyyah, as a result of their desertion of Zayd. According to the doctrines of the Imāmiyyah, the imam inherits his office from 'Alī, as the legitimate successor of the Prophet, and is, as well, the heir of the Prophet through Fātimah, and is generally the eldest son of his father. <sup>(1)</sup> On the death of Ja'faru-s-Sādiq, the Imāmiyyah broke out into two sections : *أصقوة بالنار وحفظه بالسائر مع صار - صار*

(1) The Imāmiyyah, or Ithnā 'Ashriyyah (Twelvers), believed in the imānah of Mūsā b. Ja'far, who is, according to them, the seventh imām.

(2) Those who maintained the imānah of Ismā'il b. Ja'far by reason of his being the eldest son of his father (though he died during the life time of his father), transferred the imānah to his son, Muḥammad, who is, according to them, the seventh imām, and hence they were called As-Sab'iyyah (The Seveners) so as to distinguish them from the Ithnā 'Ashriyyah or 'Twelvers'.

### Rebellion of Muḥammad and Ibrāhīm in Hījāz and Irāq.

It is necessary to continue in brief outline the history of the Shī'ites in order to make clear the rise of the Fātimids in N. Africa. It has been shown that the 'Abbāsids made skilful use of the Shī'ites in undermining the Umayyad khilāfah, but that, as soon as the 'Abbāsids came into power, the two parties separated.

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(1) It was the departure from this rule that caused the Ismā'īlian schism.



During the Khilāfah of Al-Manṣūr, Muḥammad b. 'Abd-ullāh b. Al-Ḥasan b. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī, known as An-Nafsu-z-Zakiyyah, assumed the title of Commander of the Faithful. A propaganda had been carried on in his favour for some time before he finally appeared in A.H.145 (A.D.762). In Khurāsān, his propaganda, promulgated in strict secrecy while he himself lived in concealment, gained him many adherents ظهر محمد بن عبد الله

(1) استأج الدهر الطويل و انفاذه الرثاء لا الاقامه و ظهور دعوتيه  
بخراسان و مبادية جهرا اعلانه لليلتيه بقيتا من هجاري الاسفيرة  
سنة خمس واربعمائة و قيل في غرق رجب

Muḥammad, was acknowledged in Mecca and Madīnah, and, from the latter city, he sent his brother, Ibrāhīm, to Bagrah; and after he had received intelligence of Muḥammad's death at the hand of 'Isā b. Mūsā b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. 'Abd-ullāh b. Al-'Abbās, Ibrāhīm assumed his brother's title, and his cause gained ground in Bagrah. The doctors of the canon law of the Muslim Faith and other men of high status swore allegiance to him, the Mu'tazilah and the Zaydiyyah enlisted themselves under his banner, and even the great Abū Ḥanīfah advocated his cause and was in secret correspondence with him, and Ibrahim was thus able to capture Wāḡit, Al-Ahwāz, and Persia. رقام (ابراهيم)

بالدمشق (البصرة) على خليفته (محمد) انه ودر عليه نفيه اول  
شوال سنة خمس واربعمائة و فخطب الناس و صلى امام صلاة العيد  
فما نزل و باليه بالدعوة علماء البصرة و فقتلوه و زكاهوها و باليه للمقتله  
و لم يتأخر عنه بيته من فضل البصرة أحد و باليه المقتله اختصاره  
مع التبيين و لزموه مجلسه و تدلوا أعماله و باليه ابو حنيفة يدور اليه  
و يكاتبه (2)

(1) Yahyā b. Al-Husayn, Un. Lib., Leyden, Ms. 1974, fol. 15 seq.

(2) Ibid, fol. 19.



But Ibrāhīm's authority was short-lived; a battle was fought in Bākhaurā,<sup>(1)</sup> and Ibrāhīm was killed by the hand of 'Isā b. Mūsā (Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> Dhū-l-Hijjah, A.H.145 (A.D.762)).<sup>(2)</sup>

### Rebellion of Yahyā b. 'Abd-ullāh.

Again, during the reign of Hārūnu-r-Rashīd (A.H.170-193; A.D.786-809), 'Abd-ullāh b. Al-Ḥasan b. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī raised a revolt in Daylam, and his cause gained ground in the Yemen. His wars against the 'Abbāsids became formidable until A.H.176 (A.D.792) when he was obliged through intrigue to render homage to the khalīfah, and was put to death; the manner of his death is uncertain. The efforts of Yahyā's brother, Idrīs, to stir up an anti-'Abbāsīd feeling in N. Africa, led to the establishment of the Idrīsīd dynasty and the territory it acquired was thus lost to the 'Abbāsids.<sup>(3)</sup>

### 'Alī Ar-Riḍā, the Eighth Imām.

There are some circumstances of special interest in the case of the nomination of 'Alī Ar-Riḍā as Imām, in the reign of Al-Ma'mūn (A.H.198-218; A.D.813-833). For reasons of policy Al-Ma'mūn changed the colour of his royal standard in Khurāsān, and adopted green, - the 'Alid colour; but after his return to Baghdad he changed it again for black, in order to secure the support of the royal family.

(1) A place situated between Kūfah and Wāsīt, nearer to Kūfah, and seventeen leagues far from it. (Yāqūt's Bulḍān, s.v.)

(2) Yahyā b. Al-Ḥusayn, Un. Lib. Leyden, Ms. 1974, fol. 19 b.

(3) Mas'ūdī, Murūj, II. 190.



### 5. Failure of Shī'ite propaganda in the East; its transference to the West (N. Africa).

As a result of the arrest and execution of a large number of them, the 'Alids carried on the promulgation of their da'wah in strict secrecy. They sought places of shelter which they took as homes of flight, so that they might escape arrest and punishment by the 'Abbāsids until their da'wah could be consolidated. This idea was not a new one; it was first adopted by the Prophet who concealed himself in the cave (Al-Ghār) when his life was in danger.

The theory of the Ghaybah, which had originated with Ibn Sabā, took on a new phase on the death of the Eleventh Imām, Al-Hasan Al-'Askarī in A.H.360 (A.D.878). In Sha'bān, A.H.355 (A.H.868), a son, Muḥammad, was born to Al-Hasan from a female slave by the name of Saql. <sup>(1)</sup> On his father's death, Muḥammad was about five years old. He was kept in concealment until he finally disappeared in A.H.365 (A.D.878). Hence, two ghaybahs are connected with the Twelfth Imām: Al-Ghaybat-us-Sughrā (the lesser concealment), i.e. since his birth until he disappeared from the Shī'ite party, and Al-Ghaybatu-l-Kubrā (the greater concealment), i.e. which began after the coming to an end of the former ghaybah. In Sāmarrā, Muḥammad is said to have entered a sirdāb (subterranean passage), from which he never returned. The Imāmiyyah held that he would appear again in course of time and fill the earth with justice

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(1) This is the view most commonly accepted. Some, however, assert that Muḥammad was born from a female-slave by the name of Nargis, while others maintain that he was born from a female slave called Sawzan (Ibn Hamm, I. 94).



as it is now filled with iniquity, and hence he was called Al-Imāmu-l-Muntadhar and Ṣāhibu-s-Zamān (the master of the time).

It is from the death of the Eleventh Imām (A.H. 860; A.D. 873) that the achievements of the Ismā'īlian sect began. However, the activities of the 'Abbāsīd khalfahs kept the attempts of the Ismā'īlians in check so that they had to depart from Salamiyah, the centre of their da'wah, and continue their attempts in a more favourable region, namely North Africa. The endeavours of the Ismā'īlians to establish a khilāfah of their own in Syria were more or less suppressed, and their Imāms had to remain in concealment in order to escape the vengeance with which they were threatened by the 'Abbāsīd khalfahs. We must now explain how and why their choice fell upon this region, and having done so, we will trace the genealogy of the Ismā'īlians or the Fātimids, by which name they are more familiarly known.

#### 6. Causes which Favoured the Success of Shī'ite Propaganda in the West.

##### (A) Remoteness from Central Authority at Baghdad.

It is an established fact that the decline of the central power coincides with the decline and loss of dependent territories and makes more possible the breaking away of the outlying provinces.

The Idrīsids, as we have seen, were the first of the 'Alids to establish their authority in N. Africa (Farther Maghrib) in A.H. 169 (A.D. 785), and the Zaydītes followed their kinsmen's example in Yemen. Again, N. Africa, which had been placed by Hārūn under the rule of Ibrāhīm b. Al-Aghlab, became practically



independent, and he established a dynasty that lasted for more than a century (184-396 A.H.; A.D. 800-909), and, though his successors contented themselves with the title of 'Amir' the Khalifah in Baghdad appears to have been powerless to interfere in the administration so long as his name was inserted in the 'Khutbah'.

The Turkish Mawālīs made and unmade Khalifahs as they pleased. The country was ruined by constantly recurring disorders and insurrections, and the Central power in Baghdad, then the aim of rival claimants, who fought for the crown, became absolutely powerless to defend its capital, which had been threatened by the slaves (Zinj) who revolted for fourteen years (A.H. 255-270; 869-883), and left the delta of the Euphrates at the mercy of undisciplined bands of marauders who terrorised the inhabitants and even sacked great cities such as Bagrah, Ahwāz, and Wāsit. This state of affairs vividly shows the weakness of the Central power at Baghdad which failed to defend such territories so close to the capital, and signifies how easily it had been for the Fāṭimids to establish themselves in the remote province of N. Africa which had been ruled by weak amirs.

Mention must be also made of the Umayyads of Spain which at the end of the third century A.H. had become a great and flourishing power.

If Spain which had been so easily checked off from 'Abbāsid rule, on account of its remoteness from the Central power, remained in the hands of the 'Abbāsids, it might have stood as a barrier against the endeavours of the Fāṭimids in N. Africa.



**(B) Backwardness of the Berbers and their inability to take to Muslim Civilisation:**

Since the rise of Islām the Berbers had never lived with the Arab settlers in peace. The former were comparatively more backward in civilisation and culture. They looked upon the Arabs as usurpers, and tribal feuds had often taken a furious aspect among them as well as among themselves. They had never been willing nor did they prove capable enough to take to the benefits of the Muslim civilisation, which the Arabs at the rise of Islām had brought into existence, since it was the civilisation of the conquerors. One of the greatest obstacles was probably their strong nationalist feeling which we know to have been a characteristic of the Berber people from their first appearance on the pages of history and have manifested itself again and again in succeeding generations.

Their lands, consisting mainly of sandy tracts, and barren hilly wastes, could not provide them with the necessities which civilisation always demands towards the progress and welfare of the community, nor make it possible for them to make a civilisation of their own or be in touch with some other neighbouring community from whom they could gain a glimpse of civilisation or culture. Their land could only provide them to lead a nomad life. The only exception is that narrow stretch of land on the Mediterranean, inhabited chiefly by people of Arab origin and the remnants of the Romans who had almost practically disappeared after the Arab invasion, and lying near the European coast, could gain a shadow of progress. But still, on account of the poverty of their own land, they could hardly cope with any of the



other Mediterranean powers.

(C) Feeling of resentment against the governors who imposed oppressive taxes.

Nor is the fact that the Berbers were overburdened with taxes less important. They raised their complaints against the unwise policy of their amirs, and the central power in Baghdad was helpless and too weak to investigate the causes of the complaints of the inhabitants of this remote province.

From what has been said above, we can easily understand how this state of affairs in N. Africa attracted the Shī'ites, as well as many others before.

They directed their attention under the auspices of Abū 'Ubayd'illāh who, on his arrival in A.H.386(A.D.901) found the land of Katāmah already tilled and settled by his two predecessors, Al-Jalāwanī and Abū Sufyān. <sup>(1)</sup>

Indeed, the political condition of N.Africa, as well as the religious tendency of the Banū Katāmah, who had for long been initiated by the Shī'ite dā'īs before Abū 'Abd'illāh set foot in their land, proved favourable and promising enough for the Mahdī to appear as the expected Imām and descendant of 'Alī, and achieve his end. Mention must be made of the decline of the power of the rulers of N.Africa and the activity of the Fāṭimid missionaries, who had cleverly gained the loyalty and support of various zealous tribes; these circumstances taken together gave the Fāṭimids the means and opportunity of establishing their khilāfah.

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(1) According to Maqrīṣī, Ittī'ās, p.37, the two missionaries had been sent by Abū 'Abd'illāh, Ja'far b. Muḥammad (Ag-Sādiq), who said to them, "You will settle in marshy land (the Katāmah country). Thou will till it, dress it, and make it ready till the owner of the seeds comes and finds it prepared for the sowing of the seeds." The interval between their entry and that of 'Abū 'Abd'illāh, had been a period of 145 years (A.H.145-386; A.D.763-901).



## 7. Success of Fāṭimid Propaganda in N. Africa.

### (a) Abū 'Abd'illāh<sup>(1)</sup> appointed Dā'ī in N. Africa.

The years A.H. 388-396 (A.D. 901-908) were a period of incessant struggle which Abū 'Abd'illāh's foresight and prudent policy had to overcome.

Supplied by money handed to him by the Kūfian, Abu' l-Qāsim b. Hawshab,<sup>(2)</sup> Abū 'Abd'illāh, the outstanding figure in the establishment of the Fāṭimid dynasty, became one of the Chief Dā'īs zealous supporters, and was entrusted with the propaganda in N. Africa after the death of Al-Ḥalawānī.

He started for Mecca, where he lived close to the pilgrims of Katāmah and began to listen to their conversation, which had been chiefly based on the prerogatives of Ahlu' l-Bayt, a subject with which they had been initiated by the two former missionaries.

Abū 'Abd'illāh took part in their conversation and gained their respect and appreciation, and when he stood to go away,

(1) Abū 'Abd'illāh, known as Al-Muqtasib (accountant), associated himself with Muḥammad Al-Ḥabīb b. Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il who had sent him to Yemen, where he became in touch with Ibn Hawshab, the Chief Dā'ī, who entrusted him with the title of Dā'ī in N. Africa.

Ibn Khaldūn (IV. 39) asserts that it was Abū 'Abd'illāh's brother, Abu' l-Qāsim, who had been accountant in one of the districts attached to Bagrah and that Abū 'Abd'illāh himself had been named Al-Mu'allim (teacher), because he used to teach the Inamāte Faith before he became an Ismā'īlian. Maqrīzī, (Khitāt, II. 10), on the other hand, states that Abū 'Abd'illāh himself had been accountant in one of the districts attached to Baghdad, not Bagrah.

(2) According to Ibn Khaldūn (IV. 31), Muḥammad Al-Ḥabīb dispatched Rustūm b. Al-Ḥasan b. Hawshab, one of his supporters, to Yemen to spread the Shī'ite propaganda and tell the people there that it was now time that Al-Mahdī would appear. Ibn Hawshab succeeded in spreading the propaganda on behalf of the Mahdī of the house of 'Alī, and he laid stress on Al-Mahdī's attributes which had become known to them. Soon afterwards Ibn Hawshab proved successful. He held the greater



they begged to be allowed to visit him, and to this he consented. Abū 'Abd'illāh then set out for Egypt, but on the way, the Katāmah pilgrims invited him to settle among them, and in the middle of Rabi' I. A.H. 286, (A.D. 901) 'Abū 'Abd'illāh reached the Katāmah country, where the majority of the population had been devout Shī'ites. Each of them tried to receive him at his home, but he chose to settle in Fajju-l-Akhyār<sup>(1)</sup> (the mountain-path of the chosen) where he started his propaganda by telling them, "The Fajju-l-Akhyār has been named after you, and it is derived from Al-kitmān (concealment), and that Al-Mahdī has prophesied that he will appear and establish the khilāfah by the support of the chosen of the age, namely you." This statement or rather prophecy, soon spread among the tribes, and the Berbers, accordingly, came in swarms to pay him homage and promise their support. The Dā'ī, however, became subject to controversies and debates on the part of the learned of Al-Maghrib, as some of them regarded him with disfavour, for evidently there were Berber tribes, which had not adopted Shī'ite doctrines. But the Katāmah tribe, under its chieftain Ḥasan b. Ḥārūn, stood on his side and took up arms against those who tried to interfere with his work, and thus they eventually put an end to

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part of Yemen, named himself Al-Manḡūr, possessed San'ā, and distributed his missionaries all over Yemen, Yemama, Bahrain, Sind, Hind, Egypt and N. Africa. *See Chap. II. p. 57.*

(1) In the mountain of Inkijān, near Constantine. According to Yāqūt (Buldān I, 363) Inkijān is a part in the Maghrib in the Katāmah country, where Abū 'Abd'illāh, the Shī'ite, mostly settled, and which he calls Dār ul-Hijrah (the home of flight). Yāqūt also says that he has heard some call it Ikiḡān (إكيجان) O'Leary, on the other hand, writes it Ankiḡān (انكيان) which is wrong.



this threatening aspect. This inter-tribal dispute was the beginning of a long conflict, which ultimately made the Shi'ites dominant in N. Africa<sup>(1)</sup>. Moreover, the Aghlabite ruler, Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad b. Al-Aghlab heard about Abū 'Abd'illāh, and ordered his governor of Meila<sup>(2)</sup> to make enquiries as to the nature of the man's attitude and doings, but the governor made little of Abū 'Abd'illāh, who then led a poor and humble life of ascetic character, and devoted himself to prayers.<sup>(3)</sup>

(b) Abū 'Abd'illāh Assumes Office:

Abū 'Abd'illāh then said to the Katāmāh: "I am the owner of the seeds, of whom Abū Sufyān and Al-Ḥalawānī had told you." The man's rank increased; his dignity and respect stood higher, and he soon became in a position to take the power of the Katāmāh into his hands and start his campaigns.<sup>(4)</sup>

Aided by the tribes of the Berbers and the Katāmāh, Tāgarūt and Meila fell in the Dā'īs hands, and his further progress was facilitated by the death of Ibrāhīm b. Al-Aghlab (A.H.391; A.D.903), followed by the death of his son Abu' l-'Abbās, and the nomination of his second son, Ziyādat'ullāh, who indulged in luxury and pleasure, while his ministers and courtiers were more or less Shi'ites who cared for the success of the adherents of their own sect.

(1) Maqrīzī, Ittī'āz, 31-32, and Khitāṭ, I., 349-50.

(2) Meila is a small town in the westernmost Maghrib, three days' journey from Bigāyah and one day from Constantine (Yāqūt, Buldān, s.v.).

(3) Maqrīzī, Ittī'āz, pages 32-33.

(4) Ibid, p. 35.



These circumstances combined together, Abū 'Abd-illāh was enabled to suppress the Aghlabite forces and spread his authority all over the land, and declare Al-Mahdī was now near at hand; that he would soon appear and possess the world. "Blessed be those", said <sup>the</sup> Dhī'l, "who emigrate and obey me." Abū 'Abd-illāh conducted his propaganda by telling the people that Al-Mahdī had the power to work miracles, that he could bring the dead back to life and make the sun rise in the West, and that he would possess the whole world. (1)

Not only had Abū 'Abd-illāh a very large following among the Berber tribesmen, but many of the officers, serving under Ziyādat-ullāh, were secretly in correspondence with the Dhī'l. (2)

At this juncture (A.H. 291; A.D. 903) the Shī'ites were practically supreme in all the country west of the suburbs of Qayrawān, and now Abū 'Abd-illāh sent envoys to the Mahdī at Salamiyah (3) inviting him to cross into Africa. (4)

(c) 'Ubayd-ullāh Departs for N. Africa.

To this 'Ubayd-ullāh consented, for his cause had become known, and Al-Muqtarī, the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah, ordered his arrest. It was necessary, therefore, for 'Ubayd-ullāh to escape from Salamiyah. (5) With his son and clients he set out for N. Africa

(1) Maqrīzī, Ittī'ās, page 34.

(2) Ibid, p. 34.

(3) A town in the district of Hamah, formerly attached to the district of Hims (Emessa). It is pronounced by the Syrians, Salamiyyah. (Yāqūt, Buldān, s.v.).

(4) Maqrīzī, Ittī'ās, page 34.

(5) According to Ibn Khaldūn (II, 515-16) Muḥammad (Ibn Khaldūn gives the word Ismā'il which is undoubtedly incorrect) had just died at Salamiyah, and, shortly before his death, he confided his wish to his son, Sa'id, to migrate to a distant land. As soon as his father died, Sa'id and his son, Abu' l-Qāsim, set out from this town intending to seek shelter in Yemen; but hearing of Abū 'Abd-illāh's success in N. Africa,



through Egypt, where they remained disguised for some time. Their arrival was soon followed by orders from Al-Muqtadī to his governor of Egypt, Abū Mūsā 'Isā An-Nawsharī, ordering the arrest of 'Ubayd'ullāh, as he now preferred to call himself. But the refugees escaped to Tripoli. Abu' l-'Abbās, the Dā'i's brother, who had been among 'Ubayd'ullāh's men, was sent to join his brother, and on the way, he was taken prisoner at Qayrawān, and every endeavour was made to find out some details about the companions with whom he had been travelling. But this proved in vain, and he was detained and kept in custody. 'Ubayd'ullāh proceeded to Sijilmāsah, where he was captured by its ruling prince, Al-Yasa'b. Midrār, and was kept in prison until he was finally released and liberated by Abū 'Abd'illāh. (1)

It is difficult to understand how it had been so easy for 'Ubayd'ullāh to escape arrest before reaching Sijilmāsah, if one learns that orders were given to the governors of Egypt and N. Africa urging his capture as soon as he clearly became a threatening figure to the authority of the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfahs who then possessed the countries through which this claimant pushed his way. Ibnū-l-Athīr (VIII, 13) and Maqrīzī (Ittī'ās, p. 35) both agree that on leaving Salamyah, 'Ubayd'ullāh conveyed with him considerable wealth with which he was able to corrupt some of the governors on his way to Sijilmāsah and secure his release. The statement appears probable when we learn how easy it had been for him to escape arrest by

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they both changed their course in that direction, probably meeting with the messengers, whom 'Ubayd'ullāh had sent on their way to Yemen.

*Abū 'Abdī-*

(1) Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, II, 11; Maqrīzī, Ittī'ās, 35.



An-Nawsharī, the governor of Egypt, as well as by the governor of Tripoli, who, according to Ibnū-l-Athīr (VIII, 14) wrote back to Ziyādat'ullāh, who had ordered 'Ubayd'ullāh's arrest, that 'Ubayd'ullāh had already left the town, and that it was not possible to overtake him. 'Ubayd'ullāh had an opportunity of proceeding to Castilla<sup>(1)</sup> and lastly to Sigilmāsah, where he was afterwards arrested by its ruling prince, who, on account of his position and prestige, could hardly have been won over by bribes.

(4) Abū 'Abd'illāh Continues his Career of Conquest:

Meanwhile, since the departure of the messengers for 'Ubayd'ullāh, Abū 'Abd'illāh had continued his career of conquest, and the war between Ziyādat'ullāh and the Shī'ite Dā'ī had taken a serious aspect. Meila, Saṭif<sup>(2)</sup> and other towns near the Katāmah territory were taken. Ziyādat'ullāh assembled an army of 40,000 under his kinsman Ibrāhīm b. Ḥubayah,<sup>(3)</sup> who advanced to the western edge of the Katāmah country and encamped his men at Constantine, where he stayed six months; Abū 'Abd'illāh meanwhile remained fortified in the mountain of Ikajān. Ibrāhīm had by now considerably increased his force, which came to be as twice as much, as he enlisted all the men of the Katāmah, who did not care for Abū 'Abd'illāh's cause. Ibrāhīm eventually resolved to advance and engage himself in a decisive battle by attacking Kerma, one of the towns occupied by the Shī'ites, where he was

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(1) A large town situated on the Zāb (Yāqūt, Buldān, s.v.).

(2) A village on the Zāb lying in a remote province of N. Africa three days' journey from Begāyah and one day from Constantine. (Yāqūt, Buldān, s.v.)

(3) We are at a loss as to the correctness of the word. The



utterly defeated by the Shī'īte forces and had to flee to Qayrawān with the survivors of his men. <sup>(1)</sup>

A new force soon assembled and was entrusted to Ziyādat'ullāh's kinsman, Hārūn-ut-Tubnī, <sup>(2)</sup> governor of Bagāyah, and there ensued a general engagement in which Hārūn was killed by Abū 'Abd'illāh's general, 'Arūbah b. Yūsuf, and his force utterly routed. As a result of this battle, the Shī'ītes were in a position to threaten Qayrawān (A.H. 295; A.D. 907). <sup>(3)</sup>

In A.H. 295 (A.D. 907), Abū 'Abd'illāh extended his authority over the whole country. He was invited to Bagāyah, which he occupied. His politic clemency to the inhabitants of this city produced a good impression, and did much to assist him in gaining other towns such as Majānah, three stages of journey from Qayrawān. Soon afterwards Abū 'Abd'illāh advanced on to Qasṭīliā, the general depot of Ziyādat'ullāh's munitions, provisions, and money, which all fell in the Shī'īte hands. <sup>(4)</sup>

(e) Abū 'Abd'illāh's Career of Conquest Crowned with Success.

In the spring of A.H. 296 (A.D. 908), the two armies of Ziyādat'ullāh and Abū 'Abd'illāh, both were involved in a decisive conflict. According to several historians, as Ibnū-l-Athīr (VIII, 16) and Maqrīzī (Itti'ās, p. 27), the Dā'is

spelling is quite different in the sources under discussion, but we propose provisionally to write it خَيْش.

(1) Maqrīzī, Itti'ās, p. 36.

(2) O'Leary writes it Tanabī. According to Yāqūt, it must be At-Tubnī, derived from Tubnah, a town on the Zāb; it is the biggest town on the route from Qayrawān to Sijilmāsh.

(3) Ibid, p. 36.

(4) Maqrīzī, Itti'ās, p. 37.



army numbered 200,000 men, that of Ziyādat'ullāh seemed to be much larger. (1)

At the beginning of Jumādā II. the two armies joined in a long battle, and Ziyādat'ullāh's army proved supreme in the field. But fortune soon turned and towards the end of the same month, Abū 'Abd'illāh's army inflicted a serious defeat on the force of Ziyādat'ullāh. Its leader, Ibrāhīm, retired to Qayrawān, the strongest military stronghold in Africa. Al-Arbes and Qawāidah soon fell into Abū 'Abd'illāh's hands. When the news reached Ziyādat'ullāh, he packed up his valuables, escaped from Qayrawān, and set out for Egypt. (2) His goods, which had been put under the charge of his advisor, *'Arūbah b. Yusuf*, were captured on the way and sent back to the Dā'ī. After a short stay in Egypt Ziyādat'ullāh, then broken in health, started out for Palestine and, on his way, died in Ramleh and with his death, the Aghlabite dynasty, whose hereditary governors had ruled under the 'Abbāsīd Khilāfah for over a century, came to an end.

On Saturday, 1st Rajab, 296, Abū Abd'illāh entered Raqqādah, which had been practically deserted by its inhabitants. He established himself in one of its mansions, and distributed some of its habitations among his Katāmah leaders. The people of Qayrawān, which had been given to pillage and plunder, put an end to fighting against the Shī'ītes, and their leaders took their side in their revolt against Ibrāhīm and forced him to abandon the town, then they set forth to Raqqādah to pay homage to the Shī'īte Dā'ī and express their

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(1) These historians state that Ziyādat'ullāh's army was "Countless".

(2) O'Leary quotes the name as Armuba b. Yusuf which is wrong.



joy for the victory he had achieved. Abū 'Abd' illāh declared that safety would be secured to the inhabitants of Raqqādah, so they retired to their homes, and thus the Dā'ī's achievements were eventually crowned with success.

Abū 'Abd' illāh ordered Ziyādat'ullāh's riches and goods to be fetched and collected together: On the following Friday the preachers of Qayrawān and Raqqādah were ordered to abandon the 'Khutbah' on behalf of the 'Abbāsids, but no name was inserted so far. A new coinage was prepared, but it bore no prince's name; <sup>(1)</sup> it simply had the inscription on one side "The proof of God has arrived", and on the other "The enemies of God have been scattered." Arms, too, bore the inscription "Weapons in the path of God", and horses were branded on the thigh, "The Kingdom belongs to God." <sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) O'Leary when he deals with what Abū 'Abd' illāh had done consequent upon his entry to Raqqādah: (p. 63) says, "The Shi'ite formula was used to prayer, which implied the addition of the words, "Come to the excellent work," to the orthodox call, and the names of 'Alī, Fātimah, Hasan and Husayn were inserted in the Khutbah." O'Leary's statement is obviously premature, as according to Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 11, and Itti'āz, p. 36. no name had yet been mentioned in the Khutbah, nor did the coinage bear the Mahdī's name. The omission of a name implies prudence on the part of Abū 'Abd' illāh, for it had not yet been certain whether 'Ub'ayd' illāh, whose life had been in danger would be released and liberated from his prison at Sijilmāsah. This statement will become clear when we know of the death of the two envoys whom Abū 'Abd' illāh had sent to Al-Yasa' with regard to the release of 'Ubayd'ullāh.

(2) Maqrīzī, Itti'āz; Khitāt, II, 11., p. 37-38



(f) Release of 'Ubayd'ullāh from Sijilmāsah.

During these achievements of Abū 'Abd'illāh, 'Ubayd'ullāh still remained imprisoned at Sijilmāsah. But now it was time for the Dā'ī to rescue him. At the head of a large body of adherents, the Dā'ī marched towards Sijilmāsah.

Abū 'Abd'illāh advanced and encamped before the city, intending to make an attack on the following day. Al-Yasa' marched towards Abū 'Abd'illāh and the two forces joined in fighting the whole day, and when the night approached Al-Yasa' and his relatives fled back to Sijilmāsah and Abū 'Abd'illāh spent the whole night in great horror fearing that death might have befallen the Mahdī. But early in the next morning intelligence was conveyed by the inhabitants of the city that Al-Yasa' had escaped during the night with his portable goods and relatives. Abū 'Abd'illāh went at once to the prison, whence he released 'Ubayd'ullāh and his son. He showed 'Ubayd'ullāh to the people saying, "This is the Mahdī to whose obedience I invited men." He then set him and his son on horses and paraded them through the streets crying, "This is your lord," frequently interrupting his cry with tears of joy. He sent a body of men in pursuit of Al-Yasa'. The prince was overtaken, brought back, whipped, and executed. (1)

(g) The Mahdī Assumes Power:

The release of 'Ubayd'ullāh from his prison at Sijilmāsah on 7th Dhu'l-Qa'dah, A.H. 396, indicated the blotting out of the rule of Banū Midrār in Sijilmāsah, of Banū Rustam in Tāhart and of the Aghlabītes in N. Africa, and the establishment of the Fāṭimid Khilāfah throughout N. Africa which had

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(1) Maqrīzī, Ittī'ās, 38-39.



become lost to the 'Abbāsids.

With the chieftains of the Katāmah parading him, 'Ubayd'ullāh reached Raqqādah on 80th Rabī', I, A.H. 297, where he received its inhabitants and the deputies of Qayrawān, who all paid homage to him. On the same day he established himself in one of the mansions there. 'Ubayd'ullāh gave orders that on the following Friday and onwards, his name must be inserted in the Khutbah as "Al-Mahdī, Commander of the Faithful", and that orders to this effect be dispatched to all parts of the country (83rd Rabī' II. 297). Immediately after the Friday prayer a man known as Ash-sharīf accompanied by the dhī'āh, started to persuade the people to adhere to the Shī'ite Faith, and those who refused or even hesitated were put to death. (1)

The Mahdī soon distributed the conduct of the affairs of state among the Katāmah leaders, founded state offices, collected the taxes and appointed new governors to the provinces which all became under his rule. In a word, the Mahdī had become the supreme ruler of N. Africa. (2)

#### (h) Curious Reward:

The Fātimid dynasty which, however, owes its existence to the devout Shī'ite Dā'ī, had been established through his auspices. But the fate of this zealous supporter was the same as that of Abū Muslim Al-Kharāsānī, who had likewise been an outstanding figure and a potent factor in the establishment of the 'Abbāsīd dynasty. The Mahdī, learning that Abū Abd'ullāh, had listened to the inducements of his brother, Abū'l-'Abbās,

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(1) Maqrīsī, Itti'āz, p. 39.

(2) Ibid, p. 39.



that he must regain the authority which he had transferred to the Mahdī, dispersed their supporters in various parts of the country, and ordered Abū 'Abd'illāh and his brother to be put to death (Monday, 15th Jumādā II, A.H. 998) and their supporters suffered the same fate. <sup>(1)</sup>

The Katāmah raised a riot after their funeral, but the Mahdī got on his horse, thrust himself among the rioters, and the troubles were more or less quieted and order maintained. <sup>(1)</sup>

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(1) Maqrīzī, Itti'ās, 40-41; Ibn Al-Athīr, VIII, 18.

According to some historians Abū 'Abd'illāh doubted if 'Ubayd'ullāh was the true Mahdī, in whose name he had spread the Shī'ite propaganda, for he believed that the true Mahdī could work miracles. Abū 'Abd'illāh's statements, as well as those of his brother, Abū'l-Abbās, had gained such acceptance among many of the Berbers that one of them said to the Mahdī, "We rather doubt whether you are the true Mahdī, if you are the man, you must show a proof." But no sooner had the man finished his words than he was put to death. Moreover, the Mahdī was regularly informed of what had been going on among the Dā'ī and his supporters, and he gathered from the intrigues plotted against him that his murder was drawing near.



## ARRIVAL OF THE FATIMIDS IN EGYPT.

(1) Who are the Fatimids?

The word 'Fatimids,' by which the descendants of 'Ubayd-Allah Al-Mahdi were known, shows that they descended from 'Alī (and, therefore, they were also called 'Alids) and Fatimah. But the question of the genealogy of this family has been a subject of considerable debate among both ancient and modern writers, as a result of bias of the Arab writers who are either in favour or against the asserted genealogy of the members of this family. A close investigation of this question by modern historians has not led to any result owing to the many alternative forms of this genealogy. That the Fatimids were descended from Ibn Maymūn-l-Qaddāh or from Ismā'il b. Ja'faru-s-Sādiq is not an essential point for our investigation. But it is advisable that this subject should not be passed over without some consideration of the claims made by the Fatimids.

In his "Exposé de la Religion des Druzes" (Paris 1835) De Sacy attempted to throw some light on this subject and the important fragments of the Sharīf Akhū Muhsin, (1) quoted by Ibnu-n-Nadīm, (2) but, undoubtedly wrongly attributed to Ibn Rassām, were the writer's authentic sources. Yet Nuwayrī (3) and Maqrizī have also related

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(1) Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Al-Husayn b. Ahmad b. Ismā'il b. Muḥammad b. Ismā'il b. Ja'faru-s-Sādiq-Maq-Itti'ās, pages 11-12.

(2) Ibnu-Nadīm, Fihrist, I. 186 seq.

(3) Nuwayrī, Bib. Nat. MS. 1576, fol. 47 b. seq.



Akhū Muḥaim's account, and the fact that Maqrīṣī himself read this work and described it as consisting of one volume of more than twenty parts, (1) leaves no doubt that Ibnu-n-Nadīm's attributing of these fragments to Ibn Razzām is incredible.

Other writers, such as Wüstenfeld (2) and De Goeje (3) made further attempts, but they succeeded in doing little more than adding to the number of the authorities quoted. It should be noted that no definite conclusion has been arrived at by any of them, and they are not unanimous in their attitude towards the claimed genealogy of the Fātimids. Weil and Wüstenfeld seem to be only compilers of evidences.

De Sacy (4) is in sympathy with the Fātimids as it appears from this: "A ces raisonnements de Maqrīṣī on peut ajouter que, si Obeid-Allah eût été un imposteur, étranger à la postérité d'Alī, les vrais descendants d'Alī, qui ne désespéreraient jamais qu'un jour viendrait où ils pourraient faire valoir leurs droits, auraient eu le plus grand intérêt à le démasquer." (5) De Goeje, on the other hand, deals with Ibn Maymūn as the originator of the Qarmatīan sect and the ancestor of the Fātimid Khalīfahs: "..... le germe dissolvant le plus efficace a été un pouvoir formidable, qui, secte obscure à son apparition, devint bientôt une dynastie et finit pour

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(1) Maqrīṣī, Itti'āz, p.11.

(2) F.Wüstenfeld, Geschichte der Fātimiden-Chalifen, Göttingen, 1881.

(3) De Goeje, Memoires sur les Carmates du Bahrain et les Fatimides, Leyden, 1886.

(4) De Sacy, Exposé de la Religion des Druzes, Intr. p. 251.

(5) De Goeje, Memoires sur les Carmathes du Bahrain, etc. p. 4.



conquérir toute la partie occidentale du khalifat..... vers le milieu du troisième siècle de l'Hégire, suggèrent à un certain 'Abdallah b. Maimoun, oculiste (Caddāh...) etc." In another statement, De Goeje says: "In dealing with the Fātimids and the Qarmatians, we only deal with one group." (".....nous nous bornerons à examiner la fondation de cette secte; à prouver que les Fātimides et les Carmathes ne font qu'un à proprement parler; etc.") (1)

According to Akhū Muḥsin (and the other succeeding writers who quoted him or were not in favour of the claimed genealogy of the Fātimids), 'Ubayd-ullāh, the Mahdī, descended from Maymūn b. Dayṣān, the dualist. On the death of Al-Qaddāh, his son, 'Abd-ullāh, whom Maqrīzī describes to be learned in all the canon law and customs and sects, succeeded his father. According to Akhū Muḥsin, 'Abd-ullāh assumed Shī'īte views, not because he intended to gain men to recognise the imāmah of Ismā'īl, or his son, Muḥammad, but simply as a device to attract adherents. (2)

'Abd-ullāh succeeded in forming a secret movement and adopted several grades (3) into which a proselyte was initiated before he joined the sect. 'Abd-ullāh was first established at Basrah, whither he had removed from Persia, before A.H. 261 (A.D. 874), (4) lodging there with the family of 'Aqīl b. Abī Tālib, but finding suspicion aroused at Basrah, he went to Syria and made his headquarters at Salamiyah.

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(1) Ibid, p. 49.

(2) Maqrīzī Khitāt, I. 348

(3) Mention will be made of these grades later in our account of the Qarmatians.

(4) Maqrīzī, Itti'az, p. 12



(1)

in the territory of Emessa, and from there sent out missionaries whose duty it was to preach the claims of Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ja'far as the "Concealed Imām," and of Abdullāh himself as the teacher who was to prepare men for the Mahdi's return to earth.

(2)

Abd-ullāh was succeeded as head of the Ismā'īlian sect by his son, Ahmad, who was in his turn succeeded by his son Husayn who died not long afterwards leaving a son named Sa'id, who subsequently took the name of 'Ubayd-ullāh, the founder of the Fātimid Khilāfah in N. Africa. According to this the pedigree of 'Ubayd-ullāh is as follows:- 'Ubayd-ullāh son of Al-Husayn son of Ahmad son of 'Abd-ullāh son of Maymūnu-l-Qaddāh. But this was not all. Akhū Muhsin also adds a story that Sa'id, or 'Ubayd-ullāh, was the son of an obscure Jewish smith, whose widow was married to Al-Husayn, and that he (Sa'id) was adopted by his step-father who taught him the secrets and doctrines of the sect and put him in touch with the other du'āhā.

(3)

Akhū Muhsin's account was widely accepted among later historians prejudiced against the Fātimids such as Abū Bakr Al-Bāqilānī (died A.H. 403; A.D. 1012) Ibn Khallikān (d. A.H. 681 A.D. 1282), Ibn Wāsil (d. A.H. 697, A.D. 1297), and Adh-Dhahabī, (d. A.H. 749 A.D. 1348).

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(1) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, I. 348-49

(2) Ibid. I. 348.

(3) Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, p. 21.

(4) The Qādī Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Al-Bāqilānī wrote a book entitled 'Al-Aṣrār-u-l-Fāṭiniyyah' which may be the work meant by Maqrīzī (Muqaffā, Bib. Nat. MS. 2144, fol. 166b); in this book he attacked and denounced the genealogy of the Fātimids. According to Ibn Khallikān (I. 609), Al-Bāqilānī died in Baghdad in A.H. 403 (A.D. 1012).

(5) Ibn Wāsil, Mufarraju-l-Kurūb, Bib. Nat. MS. 1702, fol. 32 b seq. A part of Ibn Wāsil's account is related by Abu-l-Fahāsīn, Vol. III. part 1, No. 1. p. 90.



Ibn Khallikan states that the pretensions of Al-Mu'izz to be a descendant of 'Ali had been contested in Egypt, so that when he arrived in Cairo, the Jurist, Abū Muhammad b. Tabātabā, accompanied by a party of Sharīfs came to meet him and asked him from whom he derived his descent. Al-Mu'izz promised to hold a sitting in which all of the Sharīfs should be convened, and in that sitting, Al-Mu'izz drew his sword half way and said: "Here is my pedigree," and scattering gold among the bystanders added, "and this is my proof." De Slane has adduced good reasons for doubting the authenticity of this story, <sup>(1)</sup> for when Al-Mu'izz arrived in Cairo, (A.H.362; A.D.973), Ibn Tabātabā had already died in A.H. 348 (A.H. 959), that is to say, fourteen years before, as Ibn Khallikan himself states. <sup>(2)</sup>

The same author also relates another story which shows the disbelief of the Egyptians in the genealogy of the Fatimids: One Friday, not long after he had ascended the throne, Al-'Aziz (A.H.365-386; A.D.975-996), went up into the pulpit, and found in it a sheet of paper on which were written these lines of verse:

1. We have heard a doubtful genealogy proclaimed from the pulpit of the mosque.
2. If what you say be true, name your ancestors up to the fifth degree.
3. If you wish to prove your assertion, give us, for your genealogy, one which may be as certain as that of At-Tai'.
4. If not, leave your pedigree in the shade, and enter with us into the great family which includes mankind.

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(1) Ibn Khallikān's Biographical Dictionary. English Translation, II. 49, n. 7.

(2) Ibn Khallikān, I. 326.



5. The most ambitious vainly strive to have a genealogy like that of the sons of Hashim (the Abbasids). (1)

Again, Ibn Khallikān relates from Tha'ālībī a third story. (Abdu-r-Rahmān III. of Spain received from Al-ʿAzīz an insulting and satirical letter to which he replied in these words: "You satirise us because you have heard of us; had we ever heard of you we should make you a reply." (2)

On the other hand, many other historians, poets, and other distinguished persons of Alid descent declared that the genealogy of the Fātimids to be true, and accordingly, the pedigree of Ubayd-ullāh, the Mahdī, is as follows: Ubayd-ullāh b. Ahmad b. Ismāʿīl b. muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl b. Ja faru-s-Sādiq. (3) Ash-Sharīfu-r-Rādī, (4) Ḥasir-i-Khosrau, (5) and even the zealous Sunnite (Umarah Al-Yamani, to whose achievements in favour of the Fātimid rule mention will be made in the next chapter, are good examples of contemporary Fātimid poets and writers. Great historical importance is attached to the qasīdah of Ar-Rādī, for it aroused the indignation of the Abbāsid Khalīfah, Al-ʿAdīr, and led to the convocation of the doctors of the canon law and other

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, II. 200.

(2) Tha'ālībī, Yatīmah, I. 224, Ibn Khallikān, II. 200.

(3) There are many alternative forms of the genealogy of the Fātimids in connection with their descent from Ismāʿīl b. Ja'far. This is not, however, the place to enter into detail.

(4) Abu-l-Ḥasan Muḥammad b. (Ali Ahmad Al-Musayn b. Mūsā b. Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Ibrāhīm b. Mūsā b. Jal'faru-s-Sādiq.

(5) Ḥasir-i-Khosrau was a devout Ismāʿīlian. He visited Egypt during the fifth century A.H. (11th century A.D.) According to him, Ḥasir-i-Khosrau reached Cairo on 7th Safar, A.H. 439 (A.D. 1047), and stayed there until Tuesday, 14th Dhū-l-Hijjah, A.H. 441 (April, A.D. 1050). As a devout Ismāʿīlian, he regarded Cairo as the Metropolis of his sect, and the Fātimid Khalīfah as the true Imam, and expresses these beliefs in his work. Reference will be made to his Safar Namah (Persian Text and Translation by Charles Schefer, Paris, 1881) in our chapter dealing with the wealth and prosperity of the country.



distinguished 'Alids who, either for fear or sectarian feeling of dislike, denounced the genealogy of the Fātimids in a general proclamation which took place in Rabī' II. A.H. 402 (A.D. 1011), <sup>(1)</sup><sub>2</sub> and was followed by a second declaration in A.H. 444 (A.D. 1052).

Although this *Qasīdah* did not first appear in Ar-Raḍī's Dīwān, yet the fact that it is quoted by various writers counts for the probability of its authenticity. As Maqrīzī <sup>(3)</sup> states on the authority of Hilālū-s-Sabī and his son, Muḥammad, this 'Alid did not record this *Qasīdah* in his Dīwān in order to escape the Khalifah's punishment and the dissatisfaction of his own father. Moreover, Ar-Raḍī's refusal to apologise for the composition of this *Qasīdah* and his putting off of the signing of the proclamation of A.H. 402 are further evidence of the authenticity of the story, and his dismissal from the combined offices of Inspector of Complaints, Naqīb (chief) of the 'Alids and Amīr of the Hajj soon after this, <sup>(4)</sup> which in accordance with the unanimous opinions of various writers greatly counts for the composition of this *Qasīdah* by this Sharīf.

A few lines of this *Qasīdah* may be quoted:

Why shall I suffer from humiliation while I have a sharp tongue (which makes me eloquent) and a nose that refuses to bear such humiliation?

I wear (this attire of) injustice in the lands of the enemy while there lives in Egypt the 'Alid Khalifah.

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(1) Abu-l-Mahāsīn, Vol. II. part 2. No. 1. pages 112-113.

(2) Ibid, Vol. II. part 1. No. 1. pages 213-214.

(3) Maqrīzī, Itti'ās, page 16.

(4) Ibid, Itti'ās, pages 15-16, on the authority of Hilālū-s-Sabī.



6. My noble birth is wrapped up with that of his by the two masters of the people: Muhammad and 'Alī.<sup>(1)</sup>

There are still several historians who do not hesitate to state that the Fāṭimid claim to descent from 'Alī rests on a solid basis. Among these may be mentioned Ibnu-l-Athīr (d. A.H.638; A.D.1240), Ibn Khaldūn (d. A.H.808; A.D.1405) and Maqrīzī (d. A.H.845; A.D.1441). Ibnu-l-Athīr attaches great importance to the *qasīdah* of Ar-Raḍī, and his refusal to apologise, his declination to sign the proclamation denouncing the genealogy of the Fāṭimids, and his dismissal from his office, and adds that he himself had discussed the question of the genealogy of the Fāṭimids with a party of distinguished 'Alids who had no doubt that the Fāṭimids were 'Alid descendants.<sup>(2)</sup>

Ibn Khaldūn, an ardent pre-Fāṭimid, has refuted in his *Prolegomena* what has been said against the Fāṭimid descent. "Yet, while dealing with the beginning of the Shī'ah dynasty," says Ibn Khaldūn, "they (the historians) agree that when Abū 'Abd-allāh Al-Muhtasib conducted the da'wah on behalf of the family of Muhammad, and it became known that he was hovering round Ubayd-ullāh Al-Mahdī and his son, Abu-l-Qāsim, who, both fearing arrest, escaped to the West, and passed through Egypt in the guise of traders....etc."<sup>(3)</sup>

Maqrīzī, who also claimed descent from the Fāṭimids proper, strongly refutes what has been written by anti-Fāṭimid writers almost in the same spirit as that of Ibn Khaldūn, and, by comparing the accounts of the two authorities, it seems that Maqrīzī has copied a good deal of Ibn Khaldūn's account.<sup>(4)</sup>

So much has been said about the genealogy of the Fāṭimids, In his *Muḡaffā*, Maqrīzī has furnished us with two accounts of two contemporary Fāṭimid writers: Abū Hanīfah An-Nu'mān, Chief qādī to the Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz and a trustworthy

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(1) Ash-Sharīfu-r-Raḍī, *Diwān*, pages 972-73. The *qasīdah* is also quoted by Ibnu-l-Athīr (VIII,8.9) and some other historians.

(2) Ibnu-l-Athīr, VIII.8.9

(3) Ibn Khaldūn, *Prolegomena*, p.21.



authority on the canon law of the Ismā'īlīan sect, and Musabbihī, also a great authority on early Fātimid history which has practically disappeared and is only quoted chiefly by Ibn Mūyassar, Ibn Munjib, Ibn Khallikān, Maqrīzī and Abu-l-Mahāsīn. The importance of these two documents lies in the fact that the identity of 'Ubayd-ullāh as the Mahdī and of 'Alid descent was admitted by the du'āns whom he met wherever he went, and shows that he conducted the promulgation of his propaganda in strict secrecy in order to escape arrest.

Abū Hanīfah An-Nu'mān relates a story on the authority of Abu-l-Qāsim Al-Hasan b. Abu-l-Faraj b. Hawshab, the future Chief Dā'ī of 'Ubayd-ullāh in Yemen. Ibn Hawshab was one of those who believed that it was time for the Mahdī to appear. One day, his illusions were renewed and he recollected the gasīdah composed by the poet Al-Fihri (1) and believed that the time (of the appearance of the Mahdī) was near. "so I went to the Tigris," Ibn Hawshab goes on to

(1) According to Maqrīzī, Alī b. Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Musa Al-Qasim is reported to have said in the year A.H.234 (A.D.868) that the Mahdī would appear after 42 years, i.e. in A.H.296 (A.D.908). This declaration found its poetical expression in Al-Fihri who says:

1. You, the Shi'ah of Truth, the possessors of faith and righteousness.
6. At the close (of the year two hundred and) ninety-six, all discussion and excuse will come to an end,
8. And the concealed gem will become precious, though (now) it is of no value (rank).
9. (This concealed gem is) An orphan (According to Maqrīzī, Muqaffa, Bib. Nat. Ms. 2144, fol. 212b, this word is used as a metaphor for 'Ubayd-ullāh), who has been hiding behind the door, has darted out upon the nest. (Maqrīzī, Muqaffa, Ibid, fol. 212b).

1      الأيانية المحمديّة      ×      ذوي الأيمان والبر  
6      فتد البتة والتعجب      ×      ثم قطع القول في العذر  
8      وصار الجوهر المكنون      ×      له علقاً غير ذي قدر  
9      يتيم لم يخلق ال      ×      باب فاق نصرة البر



say, and began to recite 'Al-Kahf' (1) when an old man, accompanied by another man, came and sat near me. Just then, a lad drew near me, and I asked him, 'Who are you?' 'A Hasanite,' answered he, so I said, 'By the father of Al-Husayn, stained with blood and prevented from that water.' Upon this, the old man looked at me and uttered a few words to the man in his presence." Ibn Hawshab then describes his conversation with the old man and adds that he was struck by his wisdom and expresses his disappointment that the old man went away without his discovering who he was and without his following him. Ibn Hawshab was, however, relieved, for he saw the other man who told him that the old man was the Imām, and then led him to the place where Ubayd-ullah was staying. Ibn Hawshab continues to relate his interview with Ubayd-ullah, who, in A.H. 268 (A.D. 881), entrusted him with the office of Chief Dā'ī in Yemen.

وقال القاضي ابراهيم بن السمان في اختراع الدولة الزاهرة : ..... قال ابو القاسم (به هوسه) : ففرغت لي الفكرة ليرا في ذلك ما وذرت قول الفري ..... فرائية الوقت قد قرب على ما قاله الفري ما فخرجة لا رجله ما ثم اخذت في قرارة موت الكلف ما فاقبل شيخ يمى منه رجلا ما نظرت الا احد ميل قلبي هية قبله ما فجلس ناحية وجلس الرجل بيدي به واقبل غلام فقرب مني ما فقلت : ما أنت ؟ فقال منى ما فاستعبرت وقلت : بابي الحسين المصطفى بالدار ما المنوع من هذا الماء ما فرائية الشيخ نظرا لي وطعم الرجل الذي بيده ما فقال لي : سادته ؟ قلت : هل سادته ..... ثم تحرك للقيام وركني ما فلما غاب نمت ما اذ لم اكنه سيقه حتى عرفت مكانه ما وعظم مرضع كلوه من قلبي ما حتى اذا كنت في حد الياس منه ما مرت بي الرجل الذي له معه ما فالتفت عليه وسأله عن الشيخ الذي له معه ما ففرغني ان اري ما وجمع بيني وبينه ..... قالوا انما سمعنا وبشت كتاب وما كثر وطرائف وطرز المهدى ما فلما وصل اليه وقرأ الكتاب ما تمثل بينه والبيات :  
 اللهم اعطاك التي لا تحرق  $\times$  ولم اراد ان ينفع ويحرق  
 عنك وبأي الله الصوق  $\times$  اليك حتى طوقك كحوق (2)

(1) Qur'ān, Chapter XVIII

(2) Naqirī, Naqafī, Bib. Nat. MS. 2144, fol. 212-213b.



According to this account of Abū Ḥanīfah, the identity of the Imām was fully recognised by his Dā'īs and favourites, and it was only as a result of the orders of the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah urging his arrest, that the Mahdī's place was always kept a secret among his supporters. It must be noted however, that the meeting of the Imām and Ibn Hawshab, which, according to Abū Ḥanīfah, took place in or before A.H. 268 (A.D. 881) when Ibn Hawshab was entrusted with the office of Chief Dā'ī in Jemen, is a matter of doubt if 'Ubayd-ullāh was the Imām and the Mahdī. For, it is fully established that the Mahdī was born in A.H. 259 (or 260) and, accordingly, he was not yet ten years old when the first meeting is alleged to have taken place. If this story is true, the only possible explanation is that the old man was Muḥammad (Al-Ḥabīb), the father of the Mahdī, and that the lad was a descendant of Al-Ḥusayn and the Mahdī himself. It is clear that this story must have suffered corruption.

Further, Maqrīzī, on the authority of Musabbihī, has related another account which indicates that the Mahdī's descent was unchallenged by the Fātimid dā'īs as well as by other men of high status in Egypt and shows that these men gave him every possible help only because he was a descendant of 'Alī.

After his account of the arrival of 'Ubayd-ullāh in Cairo and of his departure in the guise of a trader, (1)

فَأَقَامَ (المهدي) بمصر مستترا في زى التجار و فائتة الكتب (1)  
 من بغداد الا صاحب مصر بالقبة عليه والدمر عليهم الى العالم بل و  
 و بانه بصره خاصة ذلك العالم ولياً مؤمناً فأسرع الى المهدي بالخبر  
 فخرج ربه ابنه ابو القاسم وبصره عبيده و معه أموال كثيرة ف  
 فاستتر بضائع و جعل الأموال في الدوالي ....



Musabbihī relates on the authority of a grandson of Abū  
(1)  
‘Alī Ad-Dā‘ī, who accompanied the Mahdī during his stay  
in Cairo.

"I (Musabbihī) was told by ...b. Muḥammad b. Abī ‘Alī  
Ad-Dā‘ī," states Maqrīzī on the authority of Musabbihī,  
"that one day the Imām Al-Mahdī, accompanied by Abū Abd-  
allāh Ad-Dā‘ī, pronounced his prayers in the Old Mosque in  
Misr under the green pane of glass. When the two men went  
out of the first door, a man hit the sleeve of the Imām with  
his hand and said, "(How) I have got ten thousand dīnārs (by  
arresting you)." "How is that?" said the Mahdī. "Because  
you are the man who is being searched for" ..... and putting  
his hand into his pocket, the Mahdī led the man to the front  
of the mosque and said to him, "You are bound by a pledge to  
God and a solemn covenant to Him that if I bring about a  
meeting of the man whom you look for and yourself, you will owe  
me and my friend five thousand dīnārs?" Then he took hold of  
the man's hand and led him to the circle of the mosque where  
the people were collected together and entered with him in one  
side of the circle and then parted from him leaving him to get  
out of the other side and they never met again." (2)

Moreover, Musabbihī relates another story on the authority  
of the same Dā‘ī. "One day," says Abū ‘Alī Ad-Dā‘ī, "I was  
standing with the Imām, Al-Mahdī, on the bridge in Old Cairo  
when a bell rang and an usher cried out 'The conscience will be  
absolved from guilt of him who brings a man of such and such  
qualities, giving a description of the Mahdī. He who brings  
him will be awarded 10,000 dīnārs.' "O Abū ‘Alī, it is hopeless  
(3)  
to remain after that', and he then crossed the bridge.

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(1) If the pedigree is true, the name of the  
grandson of Abū ‘Alī is Muḥammad b. Abī (Ad-Dā‘ī) b.  
Muḥammad. *Maḥāṣin ilu-l-Jakim Bi-Amr-illāh*, Roy. Lib.  
Cairo, Ms. 20, fol. 12 b.

(2) *Ibid*, fol. 218 b seq.

(3) The term mentioned is which suggests  
that he crossed the Nile in a pontoon. But the words  
indicate that the two men crossed the bridge on foot.



I went on with him and asked him to proceed to the Maghrib, and to this appeal he replied, 'On the support of whom shall I depend, who is here (to help me)?' so I wept and he recited the two lines of Imru' -ul-Qays:

1. On seeing that fighting was raging in front of him, my friend wept and felt sure that we would soon join Caesar.
2. So I said to him, 'Do not let your eye weep, for we only attempt to gain a kingdom and we shall be excused if we die (without possessing it).'

Then I kissed his hand and parted from him. (1)

The authenticity of the last two accounts by Musabbiḥī is almost certain for it is probable that Abu 'Alī's grandson, on whose authority Musabbiḥī relates this story, heard it from his grandfather himself or from his father who lived not long after this incident took place. We cannot declare that these three accounts have solved the question of the asserted genealogy of the Fātimids, but, since it is our duty to add some fresh material in connection with our subject, we think that these accounts may throw some light on the genealogy of the Fātimids and make the question somewhat easier for further investigators. It is not yet definitely settled whether the Fātimids descended from Isma'īl b. Ja'far or from Ibn Maymūn Al-Qaddāh. Although the propaganda of the two sects was almost of the same nature, yet, the separation of the two parties and the hostile relations which showed itself in their wars, suggests that the Qarmatians only sympathised with the Isma'īlians for political purposes.

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(1) Maqrizi, Muḡaffa, Bib. Nat. Ms. 2144, fol. 219.



## 2. Importance of Egypt for Spreading Shī'ite Propaganda:

(a) Geographical Situation of Egypt: lying midway between the East, where Shī'ite Propaganda had failed to establish an independent Empire, and the West, where it succeeded and flourished.

The first three years of Al-Mahdi's rule were a period of incessant troubles, which he cleverly overcame; and with the death of Abū Abd' Allāh, he became practically the sole ruler of the whole country.

The Fātimids, whose endeavour in Salamiyah was directed to the establishment of a new Khilāfah on the ruins of that of the Abbāsids in the same way as those had followed in Humaymah with regard to the Umayyads, were not to content themselves with N.Africa. As has already been said, the Fātimids chose N.Africa because of its remoteness from the Central power at Baghdad, and the tendency of its people to revolt against the ruling dynasty, and the weakness of the ruling dynasty itself. They only directed their attention to this part of the Abbāsids Empire when their endeavours to establish an Alid Khilāfah in Asia were almost suppressed. This was, undoubtedly, the real cause why the Alid claimants, who were always sent for and imprisoned or put to death, kept themselves in concealment and appointed several Dū'īs to spread the Fātimid propaganda in their name for which were replaced such words as Al-Mahdi, Al-Maktūm (the concealed), etc., simply to escape the vengeance of the Abbāsids. N.Africa did practically provide a better field for the success of the Shī'ite propaganda. But neither Qayrawān nor Mahdiyyah would make a good capital for the Fātimid Empire, for the capital of a country should be selected in such a way as to be in touch with all other provinces. The same thing also applies to any vast empire. The central power



should exist in such a way as to make all the other dependent provinces almost equally accessible. Besides, it should not be within reach of the attacks of foreign invaders, whose first endeavour to attack the empire would thus be directed to the remote dependent provinces.

Soon after the establishment of the Fātimid Khilāfah in Qayrawān, the Mahdi put under consideration the scheme of invading Egypt, and although the Fātimid rule had not been established in this important part of the Abbāsīd Empire before A.H. 358 (A.D. 968-9), yet the scheme itself had been a legacy which had been handed down from one Khalīfah to another.

The Fātimid Khalīfahs were particularly interested in possessing Egypt simply because it had been within easy access; its governors then ruled Syria and the whole of Hījāz. So the capture of Egypt meant the possession of these two other important territories, and the establishment of Fātimid political and religious authority in three important Muslim Centres, viz. Fustāt, Damascus and Mecca. Indeed the success of this ambitious aim, which the first Fātimid Khalīfah intended to embark upon, would serve as a bridge on which to cross and threaten Baghdad itself, then the capital of the Abbāsīd Empire.

Maqrīzī Ittī'ās, (41-42) gives an account of the Mahdi's first step in the ambitious scheme of invading Egypt; it runs thus: "In A.H. 301 (A.D. 913), Al-Mahdi assembled African soldiers under his son and successor, Abu'l-Qāsim, who advanced on Egypt, and on the way captured Barca. The Fātimid army then marched on to Alexandria and Fayyūm which both fell in its hands. Al-Muqtadir Bil-lāh dispatched Mu'nīs, (called Al-Khādīm, the servant) at the head of a big army, which forced the invaders to retire to their land."



Maqrīzī adds that the cause of Abu'l-Qāsim's campaign on Egypt was that he had sent to Baghdad a poem in which he glorified his own family and praised the lands which he had conquered. The poet, As-Sūlī, answered the poem with another of the same rhyme in which he said, "If the world were shaped like a bird, what you have possessed out of it would be its tail."

The poem is said to have aroused Abu'l-Qāsim's enthusiasm and interest, so that he said, "By God, I shall carry on with my endeavour until I have the breast and head of the bird; otherwise I will perish while I am on the way to get possession of them."

In A.H. 302 Al-Mahdi dispatched another army under Ḥubāsah l-Yūsuf, who sailed for Egypt, captured Alexandria, then proceeded to Lower Egypt. The Khalīfah, Al-Muqtadir Bil-lāh sent Mu'nis again, and the two hosts were engaged in a long conflict. Ḥubāsah was eventually defeated and forced to retire to the Maḡrib, where he was put to death by the Fatimid Khalīfah.

Again, in A.H. 307 (A.D. 919) a big army under Abu'l-Qāsim advanced on Egypt, captured Alexandria, Gīzah, and Ashmūnāyn, and the greater part of Upper Egypt fell in its hands. Mu'nis was again sent back to Egypt, and his fighting with the Fatimid army produced a similar result. Many of the Mahdi's ships, eighty in number, were burnt, and most of the crew killed or taken prisoners. (1)

The scheme of possessing Egypt seemed immature and had to be suspended during the remainder of the Mahdi's Caliphate, for

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(1) Ibn Khaldūn, IV. 38-39.



the Abbāsīd Caliph was able to resist the attacks of the Fātimids, and the Fātimid Khalīfahs had still to deal with a series of internal troubles which the Khawārij used to create from time to time.

In Rabī' I. A.H. 322 (A.D. 934) Al-Mahdī died, and his son and successor Abu 'l-Qāsim cleverly suppressed some revolts which the Khawārij had raised in different parts of the country. In the same year Abu 'l-Qāsim dispatched an army for Egypt.

They entered Alexandria, but Muḥammad Al-Ikshīdī sent a heavy force which defeated that of Abu 'l-Qāsim who had to retire to N.Africa. (1)

During the rest of Al-Qa'im's Khilāfah and the whole of that of Al-Mansūr<sup>II</sup>, no effort to conquer Egypt was ever made, for the internal condition of N.Africa demanded all the energy and resources of both Khalīfahs. There was again a series of revolts created by several Khawārij, but the most formidable of them was that of Abu Yazīd, (2) whose troops spread in A.H. 333 (A.D. 944) almost throughout the whole Fātimid provinces, and

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(1) Ibnu-Athir, VIII. 98; Maqrīzī, Ittī'az, p45.

(2) Abū Yazīd Mukhallad was the son of Ibn Kaydād of the Zanātah tribe of Tuzar. His mother, a Hawarite had been married to his father in the Sudan, and they both went to Tuzar where she gave birth to Abu Yazid, who was brought up in this town and mixed with a party of the Hawarite, and adopted their faith which implied disbelief in the Muslim religion, considered money as public property, allowed the shedding of blood and the revolt against the Sultan. He then set out for Tahurt and started to teach the children till Abu 'Abd'ullāh marched with his body of men on Sijilmasah to release the Mahdi. Abu Yazid then went to Wafūs, when he bought a farm and stayed to teach there. In A.H. 316 (A.D. 928), his cause gained ground among some of the Berber tribes of Wafūs, the Zab, and the Farther Maghrib, and his power and followers considerably increased during the Khilāfah of Al-Qa'im. He captured Begayah and Marmajannah, defeated the Katamah tribe, entered Sabibah and captured Al-Arba, burnt it, gave it over to plunder, and killed many of its inhabitants. The capture of this city, which had been regarded as the door-way to Al-Mahdiyyah, greatly alarmed the inhabitants of the latter city and set them in dismay. Abu Yazid was soon able to encamp his men at a distance of 15 miles from Al-Mahdiyyah, and started his sudden



he was able to threaten to attack Al-Mahdiyyah itself. Al-Qā'im found it necessary to write to Zīrī b Manād, the head of the Senhājah, as well as to the Senhājah Chieftains, urging them to march forward with their men and join him at Mahdiyyah. (1)

Now fortune seemed to turn to the Fatimids. Abū Yazīd was deserted by many of his men who either joined Al-Qā'im's forces or set out for Qayrawān, and by now the Khārījīte had to depend on the Hawārah and the Banū Kamālān. Abū Yazīd was, accordingly, forced to retire with a small body of his men and leave behind his munitions and heavy baggage and advance on Qayrawān; here he was resisted by the inhabitants who forced him to retire with the remnant of his men, and the majority of them perished of hunger and thirst. (2)

At this juncture Al-Qā'im died, (Ramādān, A.H. 334), and his son and successor, Al-Mansūr, concealed his father's death so that the news might not affect the enthusiasm of his troops and give the Khārījīte an opportunity of success. (3)

Al-Mansūr's troops were greatly supported by the Senhājah force, and in A.H. 336 the Khārījīte's army was utterly defeated and Abū Yazīd himself was chased to the desert, captured, and sent to Al-Mahdiyyah and there he died of wounds from which he had been suffering. (30th Muharrar, A.H. 336) (4)

Mention must be made of the bravery and unusual ability which Al-Mansūr had displayed in fighting against Abū Yazīd. This had, undoubtedly won him great honour and respect in the eyes of his men and counted greatly for his success. (5)

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attacks on the city. As a result of this, the whole of the inhabitants fled to Tripoli, Sicily, Egypt and the Byzantine Empire (Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, 54-55).

(1) Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, p. 48.

(2) Maqrīzī, Itti'āz, p. 48.

(3) Ibid, p. 51.

(4) Ibid, p. 51.

(5) Ibid, p. 51 seq.



...The revolt of Abū Yazīd left N. Africa in a very miserable state, and were it not for the most energetic means and outstanding bravery which Al-Mansūr displayed, the Fātimid Khilāfah would have been blotted out of the whole country. The resources of the Khilāfah were crippled. It was necessary, however, for Al-Mansūr to repair what Abū Yazīd had spoilt. He spent the remainder of his life in reorganising the country, and on his death (Shawwāl, A.H. 341 (A.D. 952)) the old splendour of the Khilāfah had been again secured.

The fourth Fātimid Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz, besides being an able and efficient ruler, as his predecessors, was a man of cultured tastes and considerable literary ability.

During his Khilāfah, all the Berber tribes, including Banū Kahlān and Banū Kalīlah and two tribes of Hawārah, who had refused to accept his predecessor's authority, now paid homage to Al-Mu'izz. His politic tendency towards the various tribes did much in gaining their obedience and helped considerably in consolidating the bonds of his Khilāfah. The Idrīsid princes of the far west were put down, and thus their independent rule, which had lasted just over two centuries, came to an end.

The Fātimid authority spread all over N. Africa from the western frontier of Tripoli in the East to the Atlantic coast in the West, besides Sicily in the Mediterranean. To prove to what extent the authority of Al-Mu'izz had extended to the west, Zīrī b-Manād As-Suhājī ordered some fish to be caught from the Atlantic and sent them in jars to the Khalīfah, and when Jawhar returned to Qayrawān Al-Mu'izz was recognised as the unchallenged ruler of all N. Africa.

(b) Egypt also Important for Spreading Shi'ite Propaganda on Account of her Wealth and Tranquillity; the East being then Subject to Conquest from the East, and to incessant Invasions on the Part of the Romans.



Egypt by that time was very strong; tranquillity and order were fully established under Al-Ikhshīd who kept an army of 400,000, besides his bodyguard. Their payment and gratuities were regularly paid by the relinquishing treasury and abundant sources of wealth. It would fill the historian with amazement to trace the amount of expenditure devoured by Khumārawaih b-Ahmad b-Tūlūn on the occasion of his daughter's marriage in A.H. 282 (A.D.895) to the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah, Al-Mu'tadīd. Among the bride's outfit was a gold bedstead, consisting of four pieces and a vault interwoven with ear-rings from each of which hung an invaluable precious stone, a hundred mortars, all in gold, and a thousand running bands estimated at 10,000 dīnārs. The value of the remainder of such an equipment will be left to the curiosity of the reader. This state of affairs had greatly impoverished Khumārawaih who, in order to secure the comfort of his daughter on her way to Baghdad, ordered a palace, highly furnished and equipped by all means of convenience, to be built at the close of each day's journey. (1)

But the wealth and tranquillity of Egypt were doomed to undergo a series of misery, which reached its climax during the later part of Kāfūr's control and rule. Further, the 'Abbāsīd empire shrank in A.H. 333 to the precincts of Baghdad and the Muslim territories became subject to the attacks of the Romans, and it was impossible for Baghdad to check the Fāṭimid invasion. It is necessary to describe in brief outline the internal

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(1) Ibn Duqmaq, IV. 67.

According to Ibn Duqmaq, the amount of 400,000 dīnārs, which remained after furnishing the bride with all her necessities, was given as a reward to Abu 'Abd ullah b-Al-Gassas, who was confided to undertake the task of fitting the bride with the furniture.



affairs in Egypt during the short period preceeding the Fātimid conquest, i.e. from about A.H. 320 (A.D. 932).

Although the Fātimid attempts to conquer Egypt in A.H. 301, 302, 307, 310, 322 were checked yet the Fātimid cause gained ground in the country, for the Fātimids always enlisted among their fighting men Shī'ite missionaries whose duty it was to mix with the people and initiate them into the doctrines of the Shī'ite sect. For a long time before the Fātimid conquest of Egypt there were among the people many Egyptians who adhered to the Shī'ite sect and cared for the success of the Shī'ite cause. In Egypt not only was the Shī'ite propaganda carried on by Shī'ite missionaries, but it was also encouraged and nourished by the Fātimid Khalīfahs themselves, who used to send letters written and signed by their own hands. According to Maqrīṣī Abū'l-Qāsim wrote a private letter which he sent with an envoy to Muḥammad Al-Ikhshīd, in the hope that leniency and tact would produce a better result than hostility and war, in which field he and his father had already failed. The letter runs thus: "May God support and honour you: I have carried on correspondence, in this dispatch of mine containing this sheet written by my own hand and bearing my signature, though the obligations of religion and the proper formalities for obtaining supporters do not justify such action. I have sealed the sheet myself so that no-one of my secretaries or men of position in my court could read it. I hope that the uprightness of your aims and your excellent judgement will both direct you to the course to which I invite it. God bears witness to my inclination towards you and my desire that you would share what my right hand possesses and my kingdom contains. There is no excuse for your declining to comply with my request (i.e. acknowledge my authority), since you have exerted your effort in supporting



people who do not appreciate your good actions or show any gratitude for your loyalty. They have broken the promises made to you and have violated the covenant made with you. No one of them recognises the value of rewards or the beauty of recompense. You should not abandon the path of him who advises you, giving you priority over others, for that of one who ignores your real position and wastes your best efforts. I know that your loyalty to them for so long a time has made it abhorrent to give them up. If you so fail to follow the right path or adhere to the truth, I am prepared to be satisfied with your affection and obedience so that you may regard me as one of the chiefs of your family in whom you have confidence, and on whom you depend in your affairs. If you think this matter over, you will realise what has really induced me to make this concession to you and accept what little I can get from you in consequence of my love for you. You are worthy of my best reward for what you have done. May God cause you to recognise what is the best choice to make in all that concerns you. "God is sufficient for us and most excellent is the Protector." (Qur'an, III, 172.) (1)

It is said that the letter had no effect on Al-Ikshid. The envoy did not receive an immediate answer but was put off from day to day.

Soon afterwards intelligence was brought that Ibn Ra<sup>2</sup>iq was on his way to Egypt. This greatly enraged Al-Ikshid so that he ordered the name of the Fatimid Khalifah to be inserted in the Khutah in place of that of the Abbasid. Al-Khudari Bey (2)

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(1) Khudari Bey, History of the Muslim nations, p.72.

(2) Ibn Ra<sup>2</sup>iq formerly had been a Greek. When he was young, he was taken with his sister and brother in one of the Byzantine territories in a place called Dhu'l-Qila, and sold to a citizen of Hamleh who released him and gave him reluctantly to Al-Ikshid who enlisted him among his Mamluks. Ibn Ra<sup>2</sup>iq gained considerable reputation for his bravery and adventurous spirit, so that he could appear in Al-Ikshid's court. Soon after the death of his master he refused to work under Kafur was then held all power in his hands.



relates on the authority of Umar b Al-Hasan, the Abbāsīd Khatīb (preacher) in Cairo, a story from which we understand how Al-Ikshīd ordered the insertion of the name of the Fātimīd Khalīfah in the Friday prayer as a preliminary step to the recognition of the authority of the Fātimīds who now had won in Egypt a large number of adherents who openly propagated the Fātimīd cause and emphasised the prerogatives of Ahl' ul-Bayt; it shows also that their advocacy had gained ground even among the Egyptian governors themselves. The story runs thus: "One day," says the preacher, "I was summoned by Al-Ikshīd who said to me: "On Friday, perform the religious service in the name of Abū l-Qāsim and omit the name of Ar-Rādī (the Abbāsīd Khalīfah)." "Just as Al-Ikshīd pleases," was my answer. But thinking that Al-Ikshīd," proceeds the Khatīb, "might change his opinion and cancel his order, I went into his presence for three consecutive days and on each occasion he confirmed the order."

"I accused Ibn 'Abd' ul-Wahhāb, a Shī'ite, and a man of wonderful talents and brilliant thoughts, of having supported this idea, and on the following day I went to his home, and talked the matter over with him, then he asked me, "Did you see him again?" "Yes," was my answer, "and I have reminded him each time that I saw him for four days." "Well!" said Ibn 'Abd' ul-Wahhāb, "on every Friday morning we sit together, you should ask him in my presence whether you are to carry out his order in the Old Mosque (Amru-bni-ʿĀs Mosque) or in Ibn Tūlūn, then leave me to talk with him." We all sat together in the palace," continues the Khatīb, "and here I asked, "My lord! where shall I carry out your order, in the Old Mosque, or in Ibn Tūlūn?" "Do so in the Old Mosque, and your sub-Khatīb, in Ibn Tūlūn," was the answer. "Ibn 'Abd' ul-Wahhāb asked Al-Ikshīd what was the matter, so he answered, "I am enraged against Ar-Rādī and that lad, Ibn-Rā'iq, so I have ordered the Khatīb to mention the name of Abū l-Qāsim of the Maghrib." Ibn 'Abd' ul-Wahhāb then said, "May God support Al-Ikshīd and grant him success! You have arranged matters properly. I have heard that he (Abū l-Qāsim is still over-



whelmed with grief for his father's death; what you have heard about his nobility and his kingdom is true; thanks be to God that He has brought about this restitution to its rightful possessor through the medium of you." "Al-Ikshīd's face then shone with joy," says the Khatīb, "Then Ibn 'Abd' ul- Wahhāb turned to me and said, "Read what you have prepared." "I have not yet prepared anything," was my answer, "You have received orders five days ago to do so and still you have not done anything," said Ibn 'Abd' ul- Wahhāb. "What has he got to do?" asked Al-Ikshīd. "Well!" answered Ibn 'Abd' ul- Wahhāb, "He must prepare five thousand utterances upon the prerogatives of the Prophet, (The peace and blessing of God be upon him!) of Alī Fātimah, Al-Hasan, Al-Husayn, and Ahl' ul-Bayt, (peace be on them!) then mention must be made of their right to the Imāmah. The people will listen. He who likes to hear that will be rather encouraged, but he who dislikes it, will go away." "Well!" said Al-Ikshīd, "Let that be on Friday after next." The following day," continues the Khatīb, "I went to Ibn 'Abd' ul-Wahhāb and said to him, 'After you had left I told Al-Ikshīd that your opinion was the same as mine, but, believe me, you will be the cause of good fortune to Ibn Rā'iq, for the people who are not in favour of this scheme, will write and tell Ibn Rā'iq. If Ar-Rādī has not actually appointed Ibn Rā'iq, certainly he will dispatch him at the head of a big army, and Ibn Rā'iq will thus gain considerably thereby.'"

It is not recorded whether the religious service was actually performed in the name of the Fātimid Khalīfah or not, as the Abbāsīd Khatīb, who had received orders to this effect, does not tell us anything further about the incident. But it must be borne in mind that, if the name of the Abbāsīd Khalīfah were omitted from the Friday prayer, we should have heard of Ibn Rā'iq's dispatch to Egypt and of his assumption of power in place of Al-Ikshīd, or at least some mention might have been made



of the fact that some hostile relation arose between the 'Abbāsid Khalīfah and Al-Ikshīd, whose loyalty to the former was only to be judged by the maintenance of his name in the Khutbah. But, if we remember that this state of affairs arose during the latter part of Al-Ikshīd's rule, at a time when the authority of the 'Abbāsid Khalīfah was threatened by the Buwayhids, who soon afterwards captured Baghdad, it might seem pretty certain that Al-Ikshīd's orders were actually put into execution, at least for a short time. It was within the bounds of possibility that friendly relations might continue between the Fātimid Khalīfah and Al-Ikshīd, and result in the recognition of Fātimid authority over Egypt and the conquest of this country long before A.H. 358 (A.D. 968). Indeed, the political and sectarian atmosphere in Egypt since the time of Al-Ikshīd was obviously on the side of the Fātimids. It is said that Al-Qā'im received from Al-Ikshīd a letter in which he proposed to give his daughter in marriage to Al-Qā'im's son, Al-Manṣūr. Al-Qā'im read the letter out to his followers and they advised him to accept the offer. Al-Qā'im, accordingly, wrote to Al-Ikshīd to this effect and sent him 100,000 dinārs as the lady's dowry. Al-Ikshīd on the other hand, was greatly disappointed to get for his daughter's dowry such a scanty amount, for he had hoped to get a valuable present which he might have been proud of. But to his disgust his dream did not come true, and his relations with the Fātimid Khalīfah were considerably affected.

Soon afterwards Al-Qā'im was confronted with the revolt of Abū Yazīd, and the internal situation of the Maghrib demanded all the energy of the Fātimid Khalīfah, who died in the midst of the revolt, and his death was soon followed by that of Al-Ikshīd himself. During the whole of the Khilāfah of Al-Manṣūr,



who concentrated all his energy and wealth on suppressing the formidable revolt of Abū Yazīd, and on restoring order to his dominion after the suppression of the revolts, relations between Egypt and N. Africa were broken off. The question of inter-marriage also was dropped, and the Fatimid project of the conquest of Egypt, or at least to gain the recognition of their authority by the early Ikhshidites, failed.

#### Kāfur assumes Control:

Al-Ikhshīd had died in Damascus on 22nd Dhū'l-Qa'dah, 334 (A.D. 945), and was succeeded by his eldest son, (1) Abū l-Qāsim Anūjūr, who was confirmed in the government of Egypt and Syria by the 'Abbasid khalifah, Al-Mu'ti' (2) who issued a written document to that effect. Anūjūr, a child of 15, (3) was left in a state of pupillage by Kāfur, who practically became the sole controller of the Ikhshidite empire till he died in A.H. 357. On the death of Al-Ikhshīd a riot broke out, and Kāfur put it down with such tact that he was regarded with greater favour and consideration by all the public officials. Soon afterwards news arrived that the Hamdanid, Sayfu-d-Dawlab, 'Alī, had taken Damascus, and was marching upon Ramleh. At once Kāfur checked 'Alī, returning home with considerable booty.

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(1) The word Anūjūr signifies Mahmūd, (praised in Arabic).

(2) Ibn Khallikān asserts that the pelisses were sent to Anūjūr by Ar-Raḍī who had died five years before.

(3) A negro eunuch named Abū'l-Misk Kāfur (Camphor, the father of Musk; this name was given him by antiphrasis; camphor is white, and he was a negro) was an ungainly black slave, of ponderous bulk and misshapen legs. He had been possessed as a slave by a native of Old Cairo, but in the year A.H. 312 (A.D. 924-5), he was sold by his master to Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Tughj Al-Ikhshīd. He then rose into such favour with Al-Ikhshīd that the latter appointed him atabek (this word means a bringer up of princes; ata in Turkish signifying father, and 'bek, amir) to his two sons, Abū'l-Qāsim Anūjūr, and Abū'l-Hasan 'Alī. (Ibn Khallikān, I: 545).



This greatly increased his reputation, and, although he held no constitutional authority, he was able to get all the business of the state in his hands, and was generally conceded the title of "Ustādh" or tutor, and under this title, his name was mentioned in the Khutbah, and he succeeded in winning over the chief officers of state by substantial grants.

As Anūjūr grew older, however, a more or less veiled hostility arose between Kāfūr and himself, each supported by his party, and each on his guard against the other. Hostility, moreover, grew more bitter and the army was split into two parties, viz., Kāfūrītes (1) and Ikshīdītes. (2) In A.H. 349 (A.D. 960), Anūjūr died; his body was transported to Jerusalem, and interred near that of his father. (3) Kāfūr was now strong enough to control the appointment of a successor, and Al-Ikshīd's second son, Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī, succeeded him, with an annual pension of 400,000 dīnārs, and the whole administration of Egypt and Syria was retained in Kāfūr's hands. (4)

The new Amīr, though 23 years of age, was kept in his palace, and was permitted to see no one. The same hostile feeling continued until the Amīr died in A.H. 355 (A.D. 966). For some time Egypt remained without a regular government, and all the power was concentrated in Kāfūr's hands, and, when advised to proclaim the son of Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī, Kāfūr answered that so young a boy was not fit to reign.

On 4th Muharram, 355, about a month after Abu'l-Hasan 'Alī's death, Kāfūr displayed a pelisse of honour sent from

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(1) The Kāfūrītes were Mameluks of Kāfūr, raised by him to places of high authority.

(2) The Ikshīdītes were the Mameluks<sup>e</sup> and partisans of the Ikshīdīte family.

(3) Anūjūr is said to have been poisoned by Kāfūr.

(4) Ibn Khallikān, I. 544; Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 27.



Baghdad, and a charter, nominating himself, governor under the title of "Ustad<sup>2</sup>", and on 10th Safar, 365 (February, 964), he began to wear the pelisse in public. (1)

Al-Mu'izz attempts to take Egypt. His du'ah received favourably.

Kāfūr remained in the government of Egypt for more than two years (10th Safar, 365-20th Jumādā I, 367). Soon after his nomination, Al-Mu'izz made another attempt upon Egypt, and his army advanced to the oasis before the western frontier. Kāfūr checked the advance, but received at his court some of the Fātimid missionaries, whom Al-Mu'izz had sent as envoys to invite Kāfūr to recognise his authority. Kāfūr received them favourably, and most of his entourage and the chief officials of the state gave promises of homage to the Fātimid Khalīfah. (2)

Maqrīzī's statement seems likely to be true for Kāfūr's attitude towards the 'Ahl'ul-Bayt' had always been shown in the most signal manner. His policy had tended towards respect for the Prophet's kinsmen. It is stated, on the authority of Al-Khudārī Bey, (3) that one day Kāfūr's whip fell while he was riding his horse. A certain Sharīf (a descendant of 'Alī) took it up and gave it back to Kāfūr, who kissed the Sharīf's hand and said, "Indeed, I am to blame, could any greater honour be gained than to have one's whip given back by a son of the Messenger of God (the peace and blessing of God be upon him)?" The Sharīf is said to have gained a great reputation and benefitted considerably by the favours and grants bestowed upon him by Kāfūr.

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(1) Ibid.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 27.

(3) Page, 59.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 325



Again, another incident reveals Kāfūr's policy towards the 'Alids and particularly how interested he had been in securing their welfare and happiness. According to Al-Khudarī Bey, a lady once stopped Kāfūr in the road crying, "Mercy, may God confer His mercy and compassion on you!" One of Kāfūr's bodyguard pushed the lady away so that she fell down. At this Kāfūr was so greatly enraged that he ordered the man's hand to be cut off. The lady stood up saying, "Please, set aside my petition, and allow me to beg you to grant the man pardon, so that I may not be the cause of ill-fortune to him." Kāfūr was astonished at the lady's request, and ordered one of his men to enquire into her descent. Learning that she was of 'Alid blood, Kāfūr expressed his sorrow by saying, "It is more amazing still to find that noble ladies are reduced to such a humble position; it must be owing to the temptations of Satan that we have neglected them." He then looked after the lady's interests, and those of the descendants of noble families by bestowing pensions and alms upon them (Ibid, p.59).

From what has been said, it seems that Kāfūr had formed that plan of transferring allegiance from the 'Abbāsid Khalīfah to the Fātimid. At any rate, the internal condition of Egypt during the last few years of Kāfūr's control and rule foreboded the coming to an end of the Ikhshīdīte rule, and considerably facilitated the Fātimid conquest of the country. (1)

#### Corruption and Disorder in Egypt.

During this period Egypt suffered from intolerable misery, such as she had never witnessed before. The most serious misfortunes were that the low Nile produced famine and plague, which began in A.H. 351 (A.D.962), and lasted for nine years - till A.A. 360. Maqrīzī tells us that the famine was followed

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(1) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, I; 329



by a plague which resulted in the death of thousands of the population, so that it was practically impossible to bury<sup>(1)</sup> them, but their bodies had to be thrown into the Nile. The cost of the necessities of life rose to an intolerable degree; corn was hard to find, and farms were given up to pillage and plunder.

Further, Kāfur proved unable to prevent the Qarmatians,<sup>h</sup> who had raided Syria in A.H. 352, from capturing the Caravan of Egyptian pilgrims on their way to Mecca in A.H. 355. Nor could he stop a Nubian invasion, which plundered the southern districts as far as Akhmīm,<sup>(3)</sup> and the Nubian king was thus able to take home with him, as a token of his victory, much booty. Moreover, Kāfur's bodyguard had their pay diminished, their customary<sup>(4)</sup> gratuities were in arrear, and they were in open mutiny.

#### Egypt after Kāfur's Death:

Such was the political condition of Egypt on Kāfur's death (20th Jumādah, 357; A.D. 968), which left Egypt in a horrible state of confusion and misery. The court assembled to select a governor, a significant mark of the times, for no reference was made to the Khalīfah in Baghdad, who was a mere Phantom. The choice fell on Abu'l-Fawāris Ahmad, grandson of Al-Ikshīd, a mere child.

Soon afterwards, there arrived in Egypt Abu'l-Hasan, Muhammad b. 'Ubayd'ullah, the brother whom Muhammad Al-Ikshīd had left in Syria in A.H. 321. During the thirty years which had elapsed since then, 'Ubayd and his son had had a chequered

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(1) Ibn Khallikān asserts that 600,000 Egyptians died in the plague.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitāt I:330

(3) A town in Upper Egypt situated on the right bank of the Nile in the province of Suhāj.

(4) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, I:330



career, and the son now arrived as a fugitive, fleeing from the Qarmatians. His arrival was welcome to the Turkish troops, who forthwith elected him their general, and he at once assumed the supreme power. The use he made of his authority was to arrest the Wazīr Ibnū l-Furāt and extort from him his money; after which he departed at once to Syria. (1)

The rule of the Ikshīdites, or at least, their nominal authority, continued for five months more, a period of acute disorder, until the summer of the same year. The administration was in the hands of Ibnū l-Furāt, who was unable either to pay the troops, or to relieve the distress of the people. It was clear, therefore, that under these conditions the country could not offer effective resistance to an invader, and this was the moment chosen by the Fatimid Khalīfah to make his attack. Nor was Baghdad now able to send an army to resist the Fatimid invasion.

#### Baghdad Unable to Send an Army.

We have already stated that schism and decay had actually set in under the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah from an early date. A brief sketch may here be given of the condition of the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah in Baghdad at the time of the Fatimid conquest, in order to show how impossible it was for the Central power in Baghdad to send an army to Egypt to drive the invaders out of the country, as they used to do on several previous occasions.

Already in A.H. 132 (A.D. 750) Spain became lost to the Khalīfah. Then followed the establishment of the Idrīsīd dynasty in Morocco (A.H. 172-311; A.D. 788-923) by Idrīs b. 'Abd'illāh, of the Aghlabites in Tunis (A.H. 184-296; A.D. 800-908) by Ibrāhīm b. Al-Aghlab in Qayrawān, the supremacy of the Tulūnīdes (A.H. 254-292; A.D. 868-905), and the

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, life of Tughj; Maqrīzī, I. 330.



Ikhshidites (A.H. 323-362; A.D. 934-972) in Egypt were severe losses to the Khilāfah in its western dominions.

#### Baghdad Attacked from the East.

Nor was the East more stable. In Persia, and Transoxiana, as a consequence of circumstances that began in the reign of Al-Ma'mūn (A.H. 196-218; A.D. 813-833) there arose a great national revival resulting in the formation of several quasi-vassal dynasties, such as the Saffarids (A.H. 253-298; A.D. 867-903) and the Samanids<sup>41</sup> (A.H. 253-395; A.D. 874-999). From the latter the Ghaznawids (A.H. 366-579; A.D. 976-1183) developed, for Alphtijīn, who founded the last named line, was a Turkish slave in the Samanid court.

Many of these dynasties became very powerful, and the ascendancy of the heterodox Buwayhids (A.H. 321-367; A.D. 933-977) cramped and fettered the Khalīfahs in their own palaces. All these kingdoms nominally acknowledged the religious supremacy of the khalīfah, but in temporal matters they were absolutely independent. The chief visible token of the khalīfah was the retention of his name in the Khutbah, and on the coins.

It was not only in politics that the decay of the Khilāfah was manifest; in religion also its supremacy was assailed. In course of time, numerous sects grew out of the Shī'ah; the most famous of these, as will be mentioned later, are the Fātimids, the Druzes of the Lebanon, and, in modern times, the Bābī<sub>1</sub> sect in Persia.

Religious disagreement in Baghdad had begun even earlier, when under the mask of piety, the rigid followers of Ibn Hanbal<sup>(1)</sup> invaded the pleasures of domestic life, burst into

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(1) The head of one of the four Orthodox sects, was born at Baghdad, A.H. 164, and died there in A.H. 241. He fought and died in the dispute concerning the creation of the Qur'an.



the houses of plebeians and princes, spilt the wine, broke the instruments, beat the musicians, and dishonoured, with infamous suspicions, the associates of every handsome youth. Such a turbulent people could only be repressed by a military force, but who could satisfy the avarice, or assert discipline over the mercenaries themselves? The African and Turkish guards drew swords against each other, and the chief commander (Amīru l-Umarā) imprisoned or deposed the khalīfah, and even put him to death, and violated the sanctuary of his religious authority. If the khalīfah escaped to the camp of any neighbouring prince, his deliverance was a change of servitude, till he was prompted by despair to invite the Buwayhids, and, at their mercy, the khalīfah was soon to become a puppet.

#### Abbāsid Territories Attacked and Devastated by Byzantium.

Nor was the North-western frontier more stable. Since the rise of Islām, hostile relations between the Muslims and the Greeks had been continual; the result of their close vicinity and mutual hatred. But the Muslim power had been more or less predominant till the khilāfah of Al-Mu'tamid (A.H. 256-279; A.D. 870-892) when the 'Abbāsid empire shrank to Mesopotamia and 'Irāq, where revolts and confusion then reigned. Since then, there had been frequent conflicts; but not of an undecided character; success alternated, sometimes in favour of one side, and sometimes of the other. <sup>(1)</sup>

On the other hand the Byzantine Empire, since the accession of Basil I, had reposed in peace and dignity; and it was able to encounter with its entire strength, the front of some petty Amīr, whose rear was assaulted and threatened by his national foes. During the reign of Constantine VII, the Empire lived in peaceful relations with its other neighbours,

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(1) Cambridge Mediaeval History, IV. 140.



except the Saracens; in the east with Armenia, in the north with young Russia and Bulgaria, and in the west with Venice and Germany. (1)

In A.H. 350 (A.D. 961), Nicephorus Phocas captured Crete. Soon after this, he began a successful war with Sayfu' d-Dawlah. In A.D. 962 he captured such towns as Mar'ash and Dubik (Doliche); in the vicinity of Hambij, he took prisoner the famous poet Abū Firās, the governor of the town; and, at last, in December of the same year, he took possession of Aleppo, the capital of the Hamdanid Amirs, after a difficult siege. (2)

After the death of Romanus (15 March 963), the fourth in lineage of the Basilian race, his widow Theophonia successively married Nicephorus Phocas, and his assassin John Tzimiskes, the two heroes of the age. They reigned as the guardians and colleagues of her infant sons; and the twelve years of their military command form the most splendid period of the Byzantine annals, and the conquests of the two Emperors spread from the hills of Cappadocia to the desert of Baghdad. (3)

In A.H. 365 (A.D. 965), the Byzantines advanced to the boundaries of Syria. Hamastra and Tarsus were so greatly exhausted by famine and disease that they were incapable of holding out any longer; on 13 June 965, Hamastra was taken, and on 16 August, Tarsus surrendered. (4)

#### Invasion of Syria.

Indeed, the general results of the campaign of 965 were such that the possession of Sicilia and the island of Cyprus enabled Nicephorus to carry his invasion into the heart of

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(1) Cambridge Medieval History, IV. 130

(2) Ibid, IV. 134.

(3) Cambridge Medieval History, IV. 144

(4) Ibid, IV. 145.



Syria. Antioch fell into his hands (A.H. 359; A.D. 969), and the efforts of a hundred thousand Muslims, of the armies of Syria and the fleets of Egypt, were exhausted without effect, before the walls of Antioch.

The city of Aleppo, which was then subject to Sayfu-d-Dawlah, who also occupied Mesopotamia and Mosul, was abandoned to the Byzantine invaders (A.D. 970).

Before beginning a regular siege of the two most important towns of Syria, Antioch and Aleppo, Nicephorus Phocas made devastating incursions into Syria; one town after another succumbed to his attacks. "Never before were the Saracens subjected to such humiliation as during the reign of Nicephorus Phocas," says Mr. E.W. Brooks. "Sicilia and a part of Syria were taken away from them, and a great part of their territory acknowledged itself as being in vassal dependence upon the Empire." (1)

#### Passage of the Euphrates.

Since the days of Heraclius, the Euphrates, below the passage of Mount Taurus, had been impervious and almost invisible to the Greeks. Now Tzimisce (A.H. 361; A.D. 974) overran the once famous cities of Edessa, Martyropolis, Amidā, Mayyafariqīn and Nisibis, the ancient limit of the empire in the neighbourhood of the Tigris.

The consternation of the fugitives had already diffused the terror of his name, and Al-Mutī could not help announcing, as Abu'l-Fida expresses it (II, 116) that his arms, his revenues, and his provinces, had been torn from his hands, and that he could not defend the city.

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(1) Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV, p. 146. Abu'l-Fida's Annals, II. 116.

(2) Cambridge Medieval History, IV. 147-148



But the apprehensions of Baghdad were relieved by the retreat of the Byzantines who could not stand thirst and hunger, which both guarded the desert.

Of these extensive conquests, Antioch, with the city of Cicilia, and the isle of Cyprus, were alone restored. (1)

### 3. This State of Affairs Favoured the Establishment of the Fatimid Authority in Egypt and in the East After their Conquest of Egypt.

As we have already said, this state of affairs in the countries governed from Cairo and Baghdad favoured the ease with which the Fatimids extinguished in Egypt and Syria, both the spiritual and temporal authority of the Abbasids. By establishing their authority in Egypt, it would be possible, therefore, to extend such authority to the East, i.e. to Syria and Hijaz at least, for they were then under the rule of the Ikhshidites.

#### Al-Mu'izz Makes Detailed Preparation to Conquer Egypt.

Since A.H. 356 (A.D. 967), Al-Mu'izz had been making detailed preparations for the invasion of Egypt. In A.H. 356 he had commenced constructing roads, digging wells along the road-side, and building rest-houses at regular intervals. At the same time he began collecting funds for the necessary expenses, and paying substantial sums to the Katamah leaders, who were thus enabled to arm and equip their followers. The tranquillity which had then been reigning all over the whole provinces of N.Africa, the general disorder following the famine and plague in Egypt, and the disorganisation and confusion after Kafur's death, as well as Al-Mu'izz's recognition of the fact that there were in Egypt many zealous Shi'ite adherents in high office; all these circumstances taken

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(1) Cambridge Medieval History, IV. 147-149



together favoured the right and mature opportunity to conquer Egypt, and then extend his authority to the East.

As Maqrīzī tells us Al-Mu'izz revealed his policy in a speech which he delivered to the Katamah chieftains. It may well be quoted here, as it is a historical document embodying Al-Mu'izz's lines of policy, from the political, as well as from the religious and moral point of view.

On a rainy day, whose wind was very cold, Al-Mu'izz called into his presence a number of the chieftains of Katamah, who were ordered to make their way through a door unusually used for such ceremonial meetings. They found him sitting in a large square hall, furnished with mattresses, and covered with felt. Round him were open doors leading to his libraries. Before him was a desk, an inkstand, and some books scattered around him. He then said, "O my brethren, on this wintry and cold day, I got up saying to the mother of the princess (meaning his wife), who is now where she can hear what I am saying: 'Could my brethren possibly suppose that on such a day as this we could eat, drink and enjoy ourselves sitting and sleeping on silk and on the skins of foxes and sables scented with musk, with wine and song, as worldly people usually do?' I then deemed it advisable to send for you to come to my presence and witness my private condition while I am alone. I have no distinction over you in your affairs, except in respect of such things in your world as I cannot help having and in respect of the Imamate which is God's special gift to me. I have been busy with correspondence coming from the East and the West, to which I send replies in my own hand-writing. Indeed, I do not indulge myself in the pleasures of life; all my worldly efforts are concentrated upon and devoted to the security of your lives, the progress of your country, the humiliation of your enemies and the suppression of your opponents. O chieftains! you must act in your private time in the same way as I do in mine. Never



appear to be haughty or tyrannical, else God will deprive you of His boon of leadership, and bestow it upon others. Treat those, whose affairs are entrusted to you, and who cannot directly communicate with me, as sympathetically and kindly as I treat you; so that kindness will prevail, goodness increase, and justice spread among all men. Having done so, you may pay attention to your wives; but let each of you confine himself to one wife whom you have. Be neither too fond of women, nor so greedy as to desire to have a number of them. Such indulgence is certain to cost you great unhappiness, considerable harm, physical exhaustion, loss of vitality, and weakness of your nature. For one man, one woman is quite enough. We are in need of your support, both bodily and mentally. Let it be understood that if you abide by my orders I hope that God will make the East as accessible to us as the West has been. You may go, chieftains, blessed by God, and supported by Him." <sup>(1)</sup>

The policy of Al-Mu'izz is clearly set forth in his eloquent speech, in which he had particularly laid stress on certain points. On this occasion the Fatimid Khalīfah inculcated on his followers a mode of life of an ascetic character such as he had been leading himself, and made it clear to them that his time and energy were directed towards the attainment of one end, i.e. the extension of his spiritual and temporal authority in the East. He makes a clear statement of the means by which his policy can be effectively carried out. The security of the lives of his subjects, the progress in civilisation of his provinces, and the suppression and humiliation of their enemies (he means the suppression of revolts which might arise through anti-Fatimid factions in N. Africa) were the first steps to be taken in order that he might establish order and maintain peace and tranquillity all

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(1) Maqrīzī, Iṭṭi'az, pages 60-61.



over his dominions.

Having attained this end, the Khalīfah was not unconscious of the significance of the well-known saying, "justice is the foundation of good government"; he knew that tyranny and injustice excite indignation, discontent and rebellion, and would ruin the efforts he had taken to maintain order and justice in his Khilāfah.

It must also be borne in mind that the Khalīfah did not approve of his followers having more than one wife. "For one man, one woman is quite enough," implies an absolute prohibition of polygamy, which would, undoubtedly, as the Khalīfah himself had conceived, exhaust them, both bodily and mentally; and, we might add morally as well.

The Khalīfah was fully convinced that if his men would sincerely abide by his commands, the East would be as accessible to them, as the West had already been. The last statement in the Khalīfah's speech, which may be considered as an important historical document, suggests a comparison of his able statesmanship, prudent policy and high character, with that of Umar, the second Orthodox Khalīfah; it was these qualities taken together, that made possible the Conquest of Egypt and Syria.

Moreover, the Khalīfah's statement that he had been busy with correspondence coming from the East and the West, to which he sent replies in his own hand-writing, implies the existence of some relation between the Fātimid Khalīfah and the East, where the Shī'ite propaganda had taken root and prevailed.

4. Consequently, the Fātimids made special efforts to make Egypt, rather than the Maghrib, the home of Shī'ite propaganda; the former being more wealthy, and comparatively nearer to the old Muslim centres, i.e. Damascus, Medina, and Baghdad.



The resources of the Maghrib could hardly bear comparison with those of Egypt which, on account of her wealth and geographical situation, would, undoubtedly, make a better central power for the Fatimid empire. Further, Egypt would be comparatively nearer to the East, on the conquest of which Al-Mu'izz, as well as his predecessors, was bent. The success of such an ambitious scheme would result in the acquisition of all, or part, of the old Muslim centres, i.e. Madīna, Damascus, and Baghdad, the last being captured by the Buwayhids in A.H. 334 (A.D. 945).

That it was possible for the Fatimids to extend their influence in Syria and Hijāz soon after their conquest of Egypt was a dream which did actually come true. But the hope that Baghdad would soon follow the example of Damascus and Madīna was never realised. The Buwayhids were devout Shī'ites like the Fatimids, and the transference of the Khilāfah from the 'Abbāsids to the 'Alids was a measure which the Buwayhids at first thought of adopting. But sectarian motives are seldom effective when they come into conflict with political advantage. Mu'izz ud-Dawlah (the strengthener of the state), like all his fellow Buwayhids, was a zealous Shī'ite. He adhered to the Shī'ite doctrines of the Zaydīte branch introduced into his country by Al-Hasan b. Zayd, the 'Alid. As a result of this initiation, the Buwayhids believed that the 'Abbāsids had wrested the Khilāfah from its rightful claimants, viz. the 'Alids. But when Mu'izz ud-Dawlah thought of putting his idea into execution, he was advised by one of his supporters to abandon the idea, saying, "Your followers now think that the present 'Abbāsid Khalīfah has no right to assume the title of Khalīfah; if you order them to kill him they will do so at once, since they believe that the shedding of his blood is not



a sin; but if, on the other hand, you appoint an 'Alid in his place, your supporters will all believe that his Khilāfah is virtuous and lawful; and if he orders them to kill you, they will not hesitate to carry out such an order." (1)

This report seems very likely to be true, and the advice was followed out by all the Buwayhids and they abandoned all thought of such a transference.

As we follow out the career of conquest pursued by the Fatimids, we shall recognise that they made Egypt their Central power and from it the Shī'ite propaganda was spread in the East and the West, and that they never thought of capturing Baghdad even at the time when their names had been inserted in the Khutbah from the pulpits of the central power of the 'Abbāsids, as will be shown later. As Maqrīzī tells us (Khitat I, 378), on Jawhar's departure, Al-Mu'izz addressed the chieftains who had enrolled themselves under his banner, "By Allāh! if Jawhar were sent alone to conquer Egypt, he would not fail to accomplish this end, you are to settle in the ruins of Ibn Tulūn and build a city in the name of Al-Qāhira (the victorious; Cairo), which will conquer the world."

#### Jawhar sets out for Egypt.

Jawhar set out on 14th Rabi' II, 358 (February, A.D. 969), after kissing the hand of the Khalīfah and the hoof of his horse, and, mounting at his master's command, gave the word for the whole force to march. When Al-Mu'izz returned to his palace he sent as a present to Jawhar, all the clothes he had been wearing at the farewell interview, save only his drawers and signet ring.

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(1) Khudari Bey, History of the 'Abbāsids, p. 256.



At the head of one hundred thousand men, Jawhar first advanced upon Alexandria. The city capitulated on liberal terms; there was no pillage and no violence to any one of the inhabitants, as Jawhar was able to restrain his well-paid army in admirable discipline.

The news of Jawhar's approach caused great dismay in Fustat. It was decided that the Wasīr Ibnu-l-Furāt should ask for peace with security for the lives and property of the citizens. At the same time Abu Ja'far, Muslim b. Ubayd Allah, an amīr of high standing, and an acknowledged descendant of Al-Musayn, the son of 'Alī, was asked to go in person to plead with Jawhar, it being assumed that an 'Alid envoy would carry weight with the Shi'ites. Abū Ja'far consented, on condition that a company of citizens would accompany him.

The deputation set out on Monday, 18th Rajab, 368 (18th June, 969) and met Jawhar at Tarajah, a village near Alexandria. They delivered their petition to him, and he immediately granted all their requests, and confirmed his promises by a written statement. With this the envoys returned to Fustat, where they arrived on the 7th of Sha'bān. The Wasīr Ibnu-l-Furāt rode out to meet them, and then read Jawhar's statement. Some time was spent in discussion, but the informal gathering dispersed without agreeing to any uniform attitude towards the invaders. The city was still in great alarm, and the adherents of the Ikshidites, and the officers who had served under Kafūr, and some of the army, determined to reject Jawhar's proffered peace and to make armed resistance. Valuables were concealed, a camp was formed, and Mahmūd was chosen general. Under his leadership the Egyptian army marched out to Qiza and installed soldiers to guard the bridges.



On the 11th Sha<sup>ʿ</sup>ban, Jawhar arrived, having been informed of the intended resistance. He marched to Munyatu-s-Sayyādin (the village of fishermen) and seized the ford of Munyat Shalqān. Thereupon some of the Egyptian troops passed over in boats and surrendered, but the men on the Fustāt side put a guard at the ford. Then Jawhar stripped to his drawers, and at the head of his men waded into the river, and thus arrived at the other side where they attacked the defenders and killed a considerable number. Night had now approached, (16th Ja<sup>ʿ</sup>ban, A.H. 358; July, A.D. 969) and under the cover of darkness the rest of the defenders fled from the city, carrying off from their houses whatever they could. A deputation of wives waited on <sup>ʿ</sup>Abū Ja<sup>ʿ</sup>far asking him to write to Jawhar and obtain, if possible, a renewal of his previous offers of peace. <sup>ʿ</sup>Abū Ja<sup>ʿ</sup>far wrote as requested: the Fātimid general readily assented, and issued an order to the troops forbidding pillage and violence. At this the city recovered its confidence, tranquillity was re-established; bazars were re-opened, and commercial life went on its normal course. (1)

The offers of peace, which Jawhar agreed to grant to the Egyptians are mentioned in a detailed statement in ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Maqrīṣī. Although Jawhar allowed the Egyptians full religious liberty and the exercise of the tenets of either sect, yet his Shī<sup>ʿ</sup>ite propaganda is concealed under the veil of jīhād (holy war).

Jawhar's statement may well be given here, as it furnishes us with a full description of the Muslim world at the time of the Fātimid conquest, and sets forth the political and religious policy which the Fātimids intended to follow in Egypt in particular, and in the East in general. It will be shown

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, I. 343.



later to what extent Jawhar's policy succeeded. The statement runs thus:

"In the name of the most merciful, compassionate God, this is a statement from Jawhar, the Secretary (scribe), and the servant of the Commander of the Faithful, Al-Mu<sup>c</sup>izz li-Dīn-i-llāh (the strengthener of the Faith of God), (the blessings of God be upon him!) to those who are settled in Egypt, whether natives or otherwise. Those whom you have commissioned to interview and confer with me, viz., Abū Ja'far, Ash-Sharīf, long may he live! Abū Ismā'īl Ar-Rasīd, may God assist him! Abū t-Tayyib, the Hāshimīte, may God support him! Abū Ja'far Ahmad b. Naṣr, may God honour him!, and the Judge, (Abu-t-Tāhir), may God assist him! said on your behalf that you have asked for a covenant granting the security of your selves, property, and country, and all your affairs. I have informed them of the commands that our Lord, Commander of the Faithful, ....<sup>(1)</sup> has already given, and of his gracious favour towards you. You must praise God for His blessings and give Him thanks for the protection He has granted you, and also adhere to what you are required to do, and hasten to show Him that obedience which secures your protection and furthers your happiness and your welfare. He (Al-Mu<sup>c</sup>izz), ....., has only despatched his victorious troops for the maintenance of your support, protection, and in order to elevate your status,<sup>(2)</sup> protect you and wage Jihād in your defence; since tyrannous

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(1) The term "the blessings of God be upon him" is used more than once; we will leave a blank space to indicate the repetition of the same term.

(2) The reference is probably to the aggressions of the troops of the Byzantine Empire which had by then captured Sicilia and Cyprus and were about to push their way into Mesopotamia and the heart of Syria and threaten Egypt. As we have already stated the Byzantine troops were enabled to carry their invasion into Syria under Nicephorus Phocas, who, in A.H. 359 (A.D. 969) captured Antioch and defeated the armies of



hands have been laid upon you, delighting in humiliating and tormenting you in this year, and in overcoming by force and so robbing you of your wealth and property, in the same way as has been done to other populations of the countries of the East. This oppressor has become so formidable and intolerably greedy that our Lord and Patron, the Commander of the Faithful, ....., has thought it necessary to take him unaware by our victorious soldiers, who fight for your deliverance, and for that of all Muslims in the East that have been humiliated and ill-treated. Catastrophes have befallen them, calamities have surrounded them so much that they, more than once, have raised their voices pleading for help... It was only our Lord, the Commander of the Faithful, ....., who was deeply touched, pitifully grieved and distressed by what has befallen them. He, then, rejoicing in the favour and goodness of God and in His help and encouragement, has delivered those who were doomed to lasting abasement and agonising torture, giving security to those who were exposed to terror, and removing fear from those who were continually afflicted by horror and dread. It was his purpose to re-establish the pilgrimage, whose rites and institutions have been neglected by people from fear of being plundered, since they have not security either for themselves or for their property and assaults have often been made upon them, so that many a time blood was shed and property taken by force in spite of the great care and effective measures that have always been taken by him to put down highway robbery and make the roads safe and secure, so that travellers are not robbed of the provisions they carry, since it had come to his knowledge that men had ceased to travel because of their apprehension of danger, as there was no one to drive away the enemy or keep off

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Syria and the fleets of Egypt. These fleets, of course, had been despatched by Jawhar, who had already conquered Egypt (A.H. 358). It was also intended to be directed against the Abbasid Khalifah who, being a Sunnite, was looked upon as heretic, and against the Qarmatians who had assailed the pilgrims.



the oppressors. It is also his intention to improve the coinage, to bring it up to the standard of the coinage as it was in the reign of Al-Mansūr, and to eliminate as far as possible forgery. The rectification of these three defects has been recognised to be of the utmost importance by all who have regard for the welfare of the Muslims. No effort shall be spared to amend these deficiencies.

Moreover, I have been instructed by our Lord, the Commander of the Faithful, ....., to secure the spread of Justice, the suppression of injustice, the elimination of oppression, the eradication of forced labour and the establishing of the right. I am bidden to help the oppressed, with pity and kindness and consideration and generosity and courtesy, enquiring after their affairs, and giving them protection by day while they are busy earning their living and by night. Thus they will be enabled to lead a life, in which they are united, supported, joined together, and agreed upon one end, viz. obedience to our Lord, the Commander of the Faithful....

His orders also are that oppressive taxes shall be abolished, inheritances shall be administered in accordance with the precepts of the Holy Book, the traditions of His Prophet (may God confer His mercy and peace upon him)! In regard to inheritance, I shall treat you in accordance with what is stated in God's Holy Book and the Traditions of His Prophet (the blessing of God be upon him!) and abolish what has hitherto been taken for the Public Treasury from the estate of deceased persons who die intestate.

"I shall also proceed to repair, furnish, decorate and light your mosques; give payments to the Mu'adhhdhins and other officials. The allowances, which will be paid regularly and on a liberal scale, shall be paid by the Treasury; in no case shall they be paid through other bodies. With regard to certain



other points of which our master and Lord, Commander of the Faithful,....., has made no mention here though you have requested through your deputies, (may God support them, and direct you all to the obedience of our Lord and master, Commander of the Faithful!....), that they be included in the charter of security. I have mentioned them in answer to your request so that your minds may be at rest. Yet there is particular purpose or gain in making mention of them, since Islām is but one religion, and a religious law duly observed which implies that you remain firm in your faith and that you will be left to carry out what you are accustomed to do with regard to learning and meetings in your mosques, and adherence to the established practices of the Companions of the Prophet (may God favour them! and those who succeeded them) and the jurisprudence of the chief towns, (Amṣār) in accordance with whose doctrines and legal opinions (fatwa) judgment is passed. The call to prayer, public worship, the fast during Ramaḍān, the breaking of the fast at the close of this month, the observance of its nights, alms, the pilgrimage, the Jihād in conformity with God's ordinances in His Holy Book and the Traditions of the Prophet and the accustomed privileges of the Protected Communities - these will all be observed. I am responsible before God for the full, comprehensive and enduring... security of yourselves your property, your kindred, your wealth and your estates, etc. (Here Jawhar emphasises the point by giving three idiomatic phrases which all give the same meaning). (1) The fidelity which is binding on me lays upon me a pledge to

(1)

Several lines are here omitted which are a mere repetition of certain statements that have already been mentioned. An assurance is here added that their private affairs will not be interfered with.



God and a firm covenant with Him and His inviolable due and the due of His prophets and His apostles and the due of the Imāms our lords, the Commanders of the faithful, (may God sanctify their souls!) and the due of our Lord and Master, the Commander of the Faithful, al-Mu'īas li-dīni'llāh. You must, therefore, declare that you will abide by them and fulfil them, then come forth to me, submit to me, and remain in my presence until I cross the bridge and settle in my auspicious abiding-place. . . . 'Let your obedience be sincere and persevering . . . Do not act treacherously towards my governor who represents our Lord and Master, the Commander of the Faithful, . . .,' Abide by my orders and commands, may God guide you to the right path!" (1)

The statement embodied in Al-Mu'īas's speech delivered to the Katamah chieftains not long before the Fatimid conquest of Egypt, stating that he had been busy with correspondence coming from the East, is supported by the fact that the Fatimid troops did not encounter any serious resistance on the part of the majority of the Egyptians. It is obvious, therefore, that Jawhar pushed his way from Tarūjah to Giza without having to fight his way. Nor do we hear of any resistance on the part of the garrison of Alexandria, which capitulated on favourable terms.

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(1) Maqrīzī (Itti'ās), pages 67...70.

The statement was written in Jawhar's own handwriting and bore the signatures of several witnesses who formed the deputation, viz. Abu Ja'far Muslim b. Muhammad b. Ubayd'ullah, the Husaynite, Abu Isḥāq Ibrāhīm b. Ahmad Ar-Rassiyy, the Haganite, Abu-t-Tayyib Hasan b. Ahmad, the Hashimite, Abu-t-Tahir Muhammad b. Ahmad, the Qadi, and his son Abu Ja'li Muhammad, and 'Amr Ibnul-Harth b. Muhammad. The despatch was handed over to Abu Ja'far, and he was entrusted with the task of delivering it to Ibn'ul-Furat, the Egyptian Wazir.



Indeed, the way had been paved before him by the Egyptian authorities under the auspices of their Wazīr, Ibnul-Furāt, who despatched to Jawhar a deputation, representing the whole community of the Egyptians, with regard to their religious sects and political tendencies. The deputation was put under Abū Ja'far, a man of high standing, and a descendant of Al-Husayn, son of Alī, who, being an Alid, might be expected to carry weight with the Shī'ites, and make possible the success of the negotiations. The choice proved a wise one, for Jawhar soon came to terms with them on the basis of the document quoted above.

As Ibn Khallikān (I: 348) tells us, the Fātimid conquest of Egypt had been anticipated by almost the whole of the Egyptian troops who, together with some persons in high rank, were induced to write to Al-Mu'izz, inviting him to send a body of troops, and take possession of the capital. The only recorded resistance was that made by some of the adherents of the Ikhshīdites, and the officers who had served under Kāfūr. But these formed a scanty minority out of the whole body of the Egyptian troops; and the desertion of some of their men, who passed over in boats and surrendered to Jawhar, made the suppression of their armed resistance much easier.

The Egyptians did not object to transferring their allegiance to an Alid from an Abbāsīd Khalīfah, as they knew quite well that the transference of authority from an Abbāsīd to a Fātimid, or from a Sunnīte to a Shī'ite, would imply no change in their political condition since they would, in either case, remain dependent on one foreign ruler or another.

But a change of government might be accompanied by a betterment of their internal affairs, for under Abbāsīd rule they had been reduced to abject misery. The covenant of Jawhar made probable the justification of such a hope. The



security of their lives and property, protection against the aggression of their former rulers, and the attacks of the <sup>h</sup>qarnatians who had frequently assailed their pilgrims, and the invasion of the Greeks who had by that date seized the province of Cilicia and were about to push on into Syria, were all emphasised by the Fātimid Khalīfah by the mouth of his general.

Moreover, the promises of the repairing of their mosques, the improving of the coinage, the abolition of forced labour and the enjoyment of full liberty in the practice of their faith and their religious rites, in the case of both Muslim and Dhimmīs were naturally welcomed by the Egyptians.

The policy set forth in Jawhar's statement was calculated to promote the welfare of Egypt and was efficiently carried out by him as well as by his masters; with one exception, viz., the part dealing with the granting of full liberty in regard to the tenets and the rites of the various religions and sects. For in Jawhar's statement he had laid stress on the 'Alid claims, and after the conquest the Shī'ah sect was made predominant. This statement will become clear in the next chapter.

#### Establishment of Fātimid Authority in Syria and Hījaz and the Arrival of Al-Mu'izz in Egypt.

Jawhar found that as ruler of Egypt he was necessarily involved in the politics of Syria, some parts of which had been, at least, nominally, part of the Ikshīdīte dominions. At this time independent Shī'ite princes were ruling in Aleppo, and Husayn, the Ikshīdīte, who had returned to Syria after plundering the Wasīr, Ibnu-l-Furāt, held his own in Ramlah. Against him Jawhar sent his lieutenant Ja'far b. Falah (1)

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(1) Ja'far b. Falah, of the Berber tribe of the Katamah, was one of Al-Mu'izz's generals, and was sent by him with Jawhar to make the conquest of Egypt.



who attacked and defeated him (Dhu'l-Qa'dah, 358; September, 969). After defeating Husayn, (1) Ja'far proceeded to Tyre, where, having learnt that the propaganda in the name of the Fatimid Khalifah had been made public, he proceeded to Damascus which he took in Muharram, A.H. 359, after some resistance on the part of the inhabitants. The following Friday the Khutbah in the name of the Abbasid Khalifah was abolished, and the name of Al-Mu'izz was inserted instead. (2)

The capture of Damascus, however, brought the Fatimids into conflict with the Qarmatians, for Damascus had for some time been paying tribute to the Qarmatian leader Al-Hasan b. Ahmad, and this payment was now stopped. In Ad-Dakka, (3) on the river Yazid, outside Damascus, and from that place, Ja'far marched to meet Al-Hasan, the Qarmatian, surnamed Al-A'sam, who was advancing to attack him. In the combat which ensued, Ja'far was taken prisoner and slain, and a great number of his followers fell in the action (Thursday, 6th Zhu'l-Qa'dah, A.H. 360; September, A.D. 971). (4) After taking Damascus, Al-Hasan marched south rapidly, passed through Hamlah, and made a hurried descent on Egypt itself. He surprised Qulzum (Suez) and Farama, and thus commanded the whole Isthmus of Suez, while Tinnis declared in his favour. He then advanced into the country and

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(1) Husayn was brought a prisoner to Fustat, then he was sent on to a prison in N. Africa, where he died in A.H. 371.

(2) As Abu'l-Fida tells us (II, 115), the inhabitants of Damascus soon rose in revolt against the Fatimid authority, and discontinued the Khutbah in the name of Al-Mu'izz. But the revolt was soon suppressed by Ja'far b. Falah, and the Fatimid authority was re-established.

(3) According to Ya'qut, Buldan, Ad-Dakka is a village near Damascus (A.V.).

(4) After his death the following lines were found written on the door of Ja'far's palace:

'In questioning the (returning) caravans, I learned excellent news of Ja'far b. Falah; and by Allah! when we met, my ears had not heard anything better than what I witnessed with my eyes (Ibn Khallikan, I. 141).



encamped at Ain Shams (Heliopolis), and threatened Cairo. Jawhar had commenced defensive measures as soon as he heard that Al-Hasan had reached the Isthmus, and had made a trench before the city. At the same time, men were sent to the Qarmat<sup>h</sup>ian army, and, under the pretence of being discontented citizens, made treacherous overtures to its officers. After some delay, Al-Hasan attempted to storm the trench, but was driven back with heavy loss, the most surprising incident being the unexpected courage shown by the Egyptian volunteers enrolled in Jawhar's army. A number of the Ikshidite officers, who were serving with Al-Hasan, were taken prisoner, and the Qarmat<sup>h</sup>ians were compelled to retire to Qulzum, leaving their baggage to be plundered by the Egyptians. (1)

News of the attack on Egypt had been sent to Al-Mu<sup>c</sup>izz, and soon after the defeat of Al-Hasan, reinforcements arrived from Qayrawān under Ibn<sup>c</sup>Amār. Thus supported, Jawhar advanced on Tinnis, which now repented of its defection, and was pardoned. A Qarmat<sup>h</sup>ian fleet, which had sailed up the Nile, hurriedly retired, and was obliged to abandon seven vessels and some 500 prisoners. Thus Jawhar had effectively repelled the Qarmat<sup>h</sup>ian invasion, and acted prudently in following up the retreating enemy and relieving Jaffa. Al-Hasan fell back upon Damascus, but after some delay there began to recover, and commenced preparations for a new attempt; however this is not the place to enter into detail.

As Abū'l-Fida tells us (II, 117), Qar<sup>c</sup>ūyah, who then (A.H. 362) held Aleppo and Hama (Hims) after the death of his master Sayf'ud-Dawlah, recited the Khutbah in the name of

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(1) Abū'l-Fida, II, 117-118.



Al-Mu'izz. In Madīna prayers were offered up in the name of Al-Mutī, the Abbāsīd Khalīfah, while in Mecca, they were offered up in the name of Al-Mu'izz. (1)

At this juncture Jawhar felt that the time had arrived when Al-Mu'izz ought to come and take up the reins of government. As Ibn Khallikān states (III. 379), Jawhar wrote repeatedly to Al-Mu'izz, and soon after, he informed him by a courier that Egypt, Syria, and Hijāz (2) had been thoroughly subjected, and that prayers were offered up in his name throughout those countries. This news gave Al-Mu'izz the utmost satisfaction, and, as soon as his authority was consolidated in Egypt, he set out, after naming Bulukkin b. Zīrī b. Manād of the Banu Hājah tribe as his lieutenant governor in Ifriqiyyah. (3) He took with him an immense sum of money, the coffins of the three Khalīfahs who had preceded him, and a number of very influential and powerful chiefs. He started from Al-Mansuriyyah, (4) the seat of his empire, on Monday, 21st Shawwāl, 362 (5th August, 972). On his way he passed through Barka, and entered Alexandria on Saturday 23rd Sha'ban, 362 (29th May, 973). He went in on horseback, Abu-t-Tāhir Muḥammad b. Alwanī, the qādī

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(1) As Maqrīzī states (I, 363), prayers were offered up for Al-Mu'izz by Hassan b. Ja'far, the Masmūnī, as soon as Jawhar conquered Egypt. The news was communicated by Jawhar to Al-Mu'izz who sent a pelisse to Hassan and invested him with the government of Mecca.

(2) According to Abu'l-Fida' (II, 117) the Fātimīd authority had not yet been fully established in Syria and Hijāz, where Madīna still offered up the prayers in the name of the Abbāsīd Khalīfah.

(3) According to Ibn Khallikān, (I, 115) this nomination took place on Wednesday 22nd Rhu'l-Qa'dah, 361 (October, 972), and the people were enjoined by Al-Mu'izz to obey Bulukkin, who was then placed in possession of the province, and had its revenues collected in his name.

(4) The name of Al-Mansuriyyah was given to Sabra by Isma'il b. Mansur, the third Fātimīd Khalīfah. (Al Bakrī's Description de l'Afrique Septentrionale)

Ibn Zulaq; MS. No. 1817. Bibliothèque Nationale fol. 47.



of Mīsr (Old Cairo), accompanied by the chief men of the country, waited on him (in Alexandria), and offered him their salutations. He held a sitting near the light-house, in order to receive them, and, addressing them in a long speech, he said that he had come to Egypt, not for the purpose of augmenting his dominions and his wealth, but of maintaining the true faith, protecting pilgrims, and making war against the infidels. He declared his determination to close his life in the exercise of good works, and to act in conformity with the orders he had received from his ancestor, the Prophet Muhammad. He then preached to them and made a long exhortation which drew tears from some of those who were present; after which, he arrayed the Qādī and other persons of the assembly in robes of honour, and made each of them a present of a horse (or mule) ready harnessed, and dismissed them. Towards the end of the month of Sha bān, he left Alexandria, and on Saturday, 2nd Rāmāḍān (6th June, 974), he stopped at the wharf of Mīsr, opposite Gīṣāh. Jawhar went forth to meet him and, drawing near dismounted and kissed the ground before him. Al-Mu'izz remained three days at Gīṣāh. The army prepared to cross the river to the wharf of Mīsr, with their baggage, and, on Tuesday, 7th Rāmāḍān, Al-Mu'izz passed the Nile and proceeded to Al-Qāhīrah (Cairo), without entering Mīsr, although the inhabitants had adorned the streets of the city, thinking he would visit it. On arriving at Cairo, he went to the castle and entered a hall of audience where he fell prostrate in worship to Almighty God. He then said a prayer of two rak'ahs, and dismissed the company. It was after Al-Mu'izz that Cairo received the name of Al-Mu'izziyyah (the Mu'izziyyan), this city having been built for him by Jawhar.

On Friday, 17th Muḥarram, A.H. 364 (7th October, 974), Al-Mu'izz took away from Jawhar the superintendence of the



government offices, the collection of the revenues, and the direction of all other public affairs. Jawhar <sup>(1)</sup> had continued in the government of Egypt for four years and twenty days, till Al-Mu'izz arrived at Cairo and settled in his castle. <sup>(2)</sup>

Thus was established the Fatimid Khilāfah in Egypt, and Al-Qāhirah <sup>(3)</sup> instead of Qayrawān, became the centre of the vast Fatimid empire. <sup>(4)</sup>

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(1) The beneficence of Jawhar ceased only on his death (20th Dhū l-Qa'dah, 381; January, 996), and there was not a poet of the time but composed verses to deplore his loss and celebrate his popularity.

(2) Ibn Khallikān, I, 141-142.

(3) The foundation of the new Fatimid capital, Al-Qāhirah, which still exists under the name of Cairo, was laid soon after Jawhar's capture of Old Cairo. The new city was surrounded with a wall of large bricks, the last fragments were observed by Maqrīzī in A.H. 802 (A.D. 1400). In the middle of the great enclosure was an open space; Bayn Al-Qasrayn (between the two palaces), as it was afterwards called, large enough for 10,000 troops to be paraded; a small portion of this open space remains as Suq'un-Nahhasīn (the bazaar of copper-smiths). On the east was the Khalifah's palace; one corner of its site is now marked by Khan'ul-Khalīlī, another by the Husayn Mosque. The name of the square was of later date, and due to the fact that Al-Mu'izz's successor built a smaller palace on its west side, at the beginning of the beautiful garden which Kafur had laid out, and which the Fatimid Khalifah maintained. A great thoroughfare led through the midst of Cairo from Bab Zuwaylah on the south side, communicating with the old city of Al-Fustat and passing through Bayn Al-Qasrayn to Bab'ul-Futuh (Gate of Victory), which led out to the open country on the north. To the north of the Khalifah's palace lay the mosque of Al-Ashar, which Jawhar commenced soon after the foundation of the new capital. The wall surrounding the whole city of Cairo was finished in A.H. 359. To its south-east lay the old city which remained the centre of commercial and non-official life until the end of the Fatimid dynasty, and to the west the suburbs of Hagg, which extended down to the river and remained the port of Cairo until the shifting of the Nile in the 13th-14th century A.H., gave the opportunity for the building of Bulaq.

(4) It will be beyond the limits of our programme to trace in detail the relations between Egypt and Syria and the Muslim world in general during the Fatimid Khilāfah. However, we shall have to refer to that state of affairs occasionally. The Fatimids succeeded in establishing their authority in Cairo, which they took as the seat of their empire, and it became the centre from which spread the tenets of the Shi'ite sect which they had adopted and now endeavoured more actively to enforce. The Khutbah was repeated in the name of Al-'Asis (d. A.H. 386; A.D. 996) in Egypt, Syria, and Hijaz, as well as



in Mosul by Abu-d-Da ad Muhammad b. Al-Mu'ayyab, who was lord of Mosul and bore the title of Musanu-d-Dawlah (the glove of the empire); it was also recited in the name of this Khalifah in Yemen (Ibn Khallikan, III. 415).

It has been shown, the Muslims came into power, and succeeded in establishing an independent Ala Khalifah in the name of religion, on account of the fact of their descent from the Prophet. They propagated their creed by putting forward doctrines of a purely religious character, viz., that they were the rightful successors of the Prophet, and that their spiritual right and claim to the Khalifah had been unjustly usurped.

Since the second half of the 3rd century A.D., the community of the old Ala Faith had undergone a process of considerable alterations - the result of the nation coming into contact with Greek philosophy, and of adopting doctrines based particularly on the ideas of "rebirth" and metempsychosis. Hence, the Ala Faith under the Patristic became quite a different mixture of religion and philosophy. As a result of this new phase of the Ala Faith, there gradually came into existence such Ala sects as the Yupan and the Amazons, each of which followed their own independent doctrines.

This state of affairs had, accordingly, produced the Patristic Ala and adherents to avoid the personality of their idols, and attribute to them various occult qualities, such as a high degree of sensibility, and some immortality and divinity.

As soon as the Patristic Ala was fully established in Egypt, Isma did not spare any effort in spreading the Ala propaganda in the name of Ala in particular, and of the Ala in general. But it was not easy for him



### CHAPTER III.

#### Organisation of Shi'ite Propaganda in Egypt.

##### Educational Propaganda:

(A)

##### First Steps Taken to Spread the

##### Shi'ite Propaganda.

As has been shown, the Fatimids came into power, and succeeded in establishing an independent 'Alid Khilāfah in the name of religion, on account of the fact of their descent from the Prophet. They promulgated their cause by putting forward doctrines of a purely religious character, viz., that they were the rightful successors of the Prophet, and that their inviolate right and claim to the Khilāfah had been unrighteously usurped.

Since the second half of the 3rd century A.H., the community of the old Shi'ite faith had undergone a series of considerable alterations - the result of the Muslims coming into contact with Greek philosophy, and of adopting doctrines based particularly on the ideas of "return" and metempsychosis. Hence, the Shi'ite faith under the Fatimids became quite a distinct mixture of religion and philosophy. As a result of this new phase of the Shi'ite faith, there gradually came into existence such Shi'ite sects as the <sup>2</sup>Druses and the Assassins, each of which holding their own independent doctrines.

This state of affairs had, accordingly, induced the Fatimid du'ah and adherents to exalt the personality of their imāms, and attribute to them various exalted qualities, such as a high degree of sanctity, and even immortality and divinity.

As soon as the Fatimid authority became fully established in Egypt, Jawhar did not spare any effort in spreading the Shi'ite propaganda in the name of At Mu'izz in particular, and of the 'Alids in general. But it was not easy for him



to induce the whole of the Egyptians to embrace the Shi'ite faith, since the majority of them had been more or less Sunnites. The Shi'ites formed only a small minority who had been ill-treated and oppressed before the Fatimid conquest. The Egyptians were induced to check the Ikhshidite authority and transfer their allegiance to the Fatimids for political considerations only. They favoured such transference of allegiance when the country was undergoing a series of calamities during the later part of the Ikhshidite rule and it was not possible for the Central power in Baghdad to check the Fatimid invasion.

The first serious problem with which Jawhar had to deal was the famine due to the successive bad Niles. Fortunately Al-Mu'izz had sent a number of ships laden with grain as soon as he heard that Jawhar had occupied the country, and this caused some temporary relief in the city. At the same time Jawhar established a public corn exchange under an inspector (Muhtasib), whose duty it was to prevent hoarding and excessive prices, and several offending millers were flogged. But these expedients produced no serious relief, although they evoked the sympathy of the people, and a state of famine continued until the end of A.H. 360 (A.D. 970-71), when there were still cases of plague. In the following winter, i.e. in the early months of A.H. 361 (October, etc. of A.D. 971) the famine came to an end, and in the course of the next few months the country began to recover, and as a consequence, the plague disappeared.

After laying the foundation of the new capital, Cairo, Jawhar wrote a despatch to his master Al-Mu'izz, informing him of the conquest. He then ordered that the prayer for the 'Abbasids should cease to be offered up from the pulpits throughout Egypt, and that their names should be replaced on the coinage by the words: "Bism-i mawlaya Al-Mu'izz" (in the name of my master, Al-Mu'izz), and, according to Maqrizi,



Itti'ās, page 76, the coinage bore on one side the inscription "The Imām 'Alī adds invites you to (acknowledge) unity of God, the Eternal" on the first line, and, on the second, "Al-'Alī is li-Dīn-illāh is the Commander of the Faithful," and, on the third, "Bism-illāh, this dinār was minted in Kīr in the year, 356." The other side of the coin bore the inscription, "There is no God but God, Muhammad is the Apostle of God, Who sent him with guidance and the religion of truth that He might cause it to prevail over all religions, though the polytheists may be averse, Allāh is the best of the inheritors, the minister of the best of the Apostles." (Ibid, p. 76).

He forbade also the black livery of the Abbāsids to be worn any longer, <sup>(1)</sup> and directed the Khaṭīb to wear white vestments. Further, he prohibited the recital of "Ṣabbih Bism-i Rabbik," during the Friday prayer, and abolished the 'Takbīr' after Friday prayer; which both formed a part of the ritual familiar to the Sunnītes (Maqrīṣī, Itti'ās, p. 76,). Every Saturday, he held a court for the hearing of grievances, <sup>(2)</sup> at which the Wazīr, the Qādī, and a number of the great doctors <sup>(3)</sup> were present, whilst he himself passed judgment. <sup>(4)</sup>

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(1) The black dress was worn not only by members of the Abbāsīd family, but by the public officers in their service (See De Sacy's Chrestomathie Arabe, t. II. note 108, pages 263-66)

(2) In the court of 'Inspection of Grievances' it was the sovereign or one of his great officers who presided as judge. The establishment of this court was rendered necessary by the difficulty of executing the decrees of the Qādī when the defendant was of high rank or employed in the service of government. None dared to disobey the citation before this court, and none were powerful enough to escape its severity (De Slane, Ibn Khallikān's Biographical Dictionary-Translation, note 14, I. 346-7.

(3) These doctors must have been Shī'ītes, for as we shall see later, almost only Shī'ītes were entrusted with government high offices.

(4) Ibn Khallikān, I. 149.



(1) Shī'ite Ritual in the Mosques.

(A) Shī'ite Ritual in the Old Mosque.

Islam was introduced into Egypt in A.H. 20 (A.D. 640). Since that time, mosques have been built, not only for religious purposes, but for political and social purposes also. Later, on these mosques were used as educational institutions where children were taught religion and the Arabic language. (1) The mosque of Al-Azhar, which is still famous and has been for many centuries the centre of Muslim learning, is an example. (2) The oldest of these mosques is the mosque of 'Amr, erected in A.H. 21, soon after the Arab conquest of Egypt by 'Amr b. Al-'As who founded the Muslim capital of Al-Fustāt. At the time of Fātimid conquest, the Fustāt was more quickly populated than the 'Akkar and the Qatāi, (3) where were situated the two mosques, i.e. of the 'Akkar and Ibn Rūfūn.

On the 19th of Sha'bān, 358 (A.D. 968-9), a few days after the capture of the Fustāt, the first Friday service

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(1) Some mosques were also used as fortresses, and they were surrounded by high and thick walls.

(2) Being the oldest mosque built in Egypt, "Amr's Mosque" also bears the name of the "Old Mosque" and the "Crown of Mosques," and "Al-Masjid al-Jamī."

(3) This town was founded in A.H. 133 (A.D. 750-51) by Ṣalīh b. 'Abd'allāh b. 'Abbās after his pursuit, capture, and murder of Marwān, the last of the Umayyad Khālifas. The site of the town had formerly been a barren waste, a part of which called Jabal Yashkur (Mount Yashkur), where Ṣalīh settled with his troops. ('Akkar) from which word the town derived its name, for the troops of Ṣalīh made necessary the building of habitations for their accommodation.

Al-Qatāi (sections of land) was founded by Ahmad b. Rūfūn (A.H. 254-270 A.D. 868-863) in A.H. 254 at the foot of the Mukattam Hill when the increase in his Greek and Arabian troops demanded the assignment of habitations for them. In A.H. 263 (A.D. 876-7), Ibn Rūfūn commenced the building of his mosque, and in Rabi' al-Thani, 265, the Friday service was recited in it for the first time.



was performed in the Old Mosque, thus putting into execution the idea of spreading the Shi'ite propaganda in the name of the Fatimids. (1)

Hibat'ullāh b. Ahmad, (2) deputy preacher of the mosque, preached on that occasion, and caused the following prayers to be added to the Khutbah, in place of those for the Abbāsid Khalīfah, "O Allāh! bless Thy servant and representative, the product of Prophethip, the descendant of noble ancestors who guide others on the right way, being themselves guided by God, - the servant of God, the Imām Ma'add Abū Tamīm Al-Mu'izz li-Dīn-illāh, the Commander of the Faithful, even as Thou didst bless his sinless parents and his forefathers, the rightly-guided imāms. O Allāh! raise his rank, exalt his word make clear his proof, rally his subjects in submission to him, join all hearts in loyalty and love to them, make righteousness to consist of obedience to appoint him heir of the East and the West! O God! make praiseworthy all that he does from beginning to end, since Thou hast said - and all that Thou sayest is true-" "And certainly We have written in the Psalms after the promulgation of the law, that my servants, the righteous shall inherit the Earth." (3) "He has been grieved for what has befallen Thy religion, and for the violation of of Thy sanctity, and for the cessation of the Jihād on Thy path and for the interruption of the pilgrimage to Thy house and of visiting the tomb of Thy Apostle (the peace and blessing of God be upon him!). He (Al-Mu'izz) has made preparations for the Jihād, and has taken precautions for every danger, and has despatched troops for supporting Thy cause, sparing neither money in obedience to Thee, nor effort to win Thy good pleasure.

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, I. 149.

(2) Andarī (Rib. Nat. Ms. 149, fol. 117) gives the name as Abū Muḥammad 'Abdī-ullāh b. Ahmad As-Samsū'i.

(3) Qur'an, XII, 105.



The ignorant have been checked, intruders have been suppressed; thus Right has become manifest and wrong has become dim. O Allāh! grant victory to the armies he has despatched and the squadrons he has raised to fight against polytheists and heretics, to protect the Muslims, and to garrison the frontiers and holy places and to do away with oppression and spread justice among the nations. O Allāh! exalt his banners and make them glorious and make his soldiers victorious, make him Thy instrument for good, and be Thou our everlasting Protector." (1)

On Jumādā I. A.H. 359, (A.D. 969-70), the words "Come to the most excellent work," and the pronouncement of the "Bism-illāh" in a loud voice were introduced into the adhān in the Old Mosque, about eight months after the Fāṭimid conquest, and the reciting of the Khutbah on behalf of the Fāṭimid Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz. In Ramaḍān, A.H. 359, Ja'far caused the walls of the Old Mosque to be polished in green, the emblem of the <sup>III</sup>Alids. (2)

The insertion of Al-Mu'izz's name in the Khutbah on Friday, 19th Sha'bān, 358 instead of that of the 'Abbāsīd Khalīfah, marks an important incident in the history of the Fāṭimid Khalīfah in Egypt, and implies the beginning of the spread of the Shī'ite propaganda under them. The prayers for the Fāṭimid Khalīfah were an abbreviated copy of Ja'far's statement embodying the offer of peace made to the Egyptians. The prayers were uttered in such a manner as to lay stress on the prerogatives of the <sup>III</sup>Alids - the righteous imāms - whose cause had been, according to the Khaṭīb's speech, violated by the heretic Sunnites, to whose faith the Khaṭīb himself was attached. The word Jihād inserted in the Khutbah implies

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(1) Maqrīzī, Iṭṭi'āz, pages 75-76.

(2) Ibid.



the Fātimid Khalīfah's scheme of conquering the East and the West, to inherit the earth. Again, the prayers for the Fātimid Khalīfah show the distinctively religious form in which the 'Alids always presented their worldly aims. The religious strife between the Shī'ites and the Sunnites assumed a more hostile form in later generations when each sect cursed and denounced the other. The Shī'ite propaganda under the Fātimids found in Egypt a more promising field than in North Africa and soon flourished and became predominant. The Ahl-ul-Bayt were prayed for by the Khatīb, who, on Friday 8th Dhū'l-Qa'dah of the same year caused these words to be added at the end of the Khutbah:-

"O God! bless Muhammad the Chosen, 'Alī the accepted, Fātimah the pure, and Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn, the two grandsons of the Apostle; them whom Thou hast freed from stain and thoroughly purified. O God! bless the pure Imāms, the ancestors of the Commander of the Faithful." (1)

During the Khilāfah of Al-'Azīz (A.H. 365-386. A.D. 975-996) the pulpit of 'Amr's Mosque was replaced in Rabī'ī, (A.H. 379. A.D. 989) by a gilded pulpit which remained there until it was replaced in A.H. 406 (A.D. 1014) during the Khilāfah of Al-Muḥim (A.H. 386-411. A.D. 996-1021) by a larger pulpit which has continued to the present day. The sons of 'Abd'us-Samī', who had held the privilege of reciting the Khutbah for sixty years, were dismissed by Ja'far b. Al-Hasan, the Husaynite who was entrusted with the office of reciting the Khutbah in the Old Mosque, while his brother was entrusted with it in the Azhar Mosque. (2)

According to Maqrīzī (Khitat, II.250) on the authority of Al-Masabbihī, a number of 1296 volumes of the Holy Qur'ān, of different forms and sizes, some of which were written in gold -

(1) Maqrīzī, Ittī'āz, p.77.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 248-49. According to Ibn Duqmaq, IV, 64, the sons of 'Abd-us-Samī' were finally dismissed in A.H. 379 by the Khalīfah, Al-'Azīz.



were removed in A.H. 403 from the royal palace to the Old Mosque, where the people were allowed to recite from them. In the same year a tannūr (fire-place) containing an amount of silver to the value of 10,000 dirhams was placed in the mosque, and endowments were granted by Al-Hakim. Since the building of the Old Mosque, several rulers built additions to it, and the Fātimid Khalīfahs bestowed endowments and gifts upon the mosque. In A.H. 564 (A.D. 1168-9) the Fātimids became too weak to resist the invasion of the Crusading army who captured Cairo and inflicted severe calamities on the inhabitants. Shāwar, the Wazīr of Al-Adid, the last of the Fātimid Khalīfahs, ordered the burning of Cairo, which was given up to the flames for 54 days. The Old Mosque was seriously affected by the fire, so that it was renewed by Saladin who, in A.H. 568, made additions to this mosque (Ibid II. 251).

(B) Shī'ite Ritual in Ibn Tulūn's Mosque.

On Friday 16th Rabi' II. 359, that is to say, about eight months after the reciting of the first Friday service in the Old Mosque, the Shī'ite propaganda under the Fātimids underwent several additions in Ibn Tulūn's Mosque. In the adhān, or call to prayer, the mu'adhdhins introduced the words, "Come to the most excellent work," which are peculiar to the Shī'ite form of the adhān. This form was then adopted in the other mosques of the 'Askar, and, in Jumādā I. of the same year, they were inserted in the adhān in the Old Mosque. All this gave satisfaction to Ja'far, and he reported to Al-Mu'izz this pleasing intelligence. On that occasion a great number of the military were present in Ibn Tulūn's Mosque, and the preacher, 'Abd' us-Samī', made mention in the Khutbah of the Ahl-ul-Hayt and their excellent merits; he prayed also for the Caliph. (1)

(3) It is only under certain conditions that the

(1) Ja'far disapproved of prayers being made for himself, and said that this was not included in the directions given him by his master. (Magīzī, Khitat, II. 270).



and did not pronounce (aloud) the Bism-illāh <sup>(1)</sup> in the Khutbah and before each chapter of the Qur'ān. He then during the prayer read the Chapter of the Congregation (Sūrat'ul-Jam'ah, Qur'ān, 62), and the Chapter of the Hypocrites (Sūrat'ul-Munāfiqīn, Qur'ān, 63). He then pronounced the Qunūt <sup>(2)</sup> after the second rak'ah, and, descending to perform the Sujūd, he omitted the rukū'. Upon this 'Alī b. 'Abd'ul-Walīd, the military judge of Jashar, shouted out, "Your prayers are invalid; you must, <sup>(3)</sup> therefore, perform it as a noon prayer in four rak'ahs. (Maqrīfī, Khitat, II. 270).

(C) Shī'ite Ritual in the Ashar Mosque.

The building of a mosque, in which the Muslim may form a congregation for saying their prayers, has always taken the first place in the policy of the Muslim governors, particularly on the occasion of founding a new capital. The Fātimids were Shī'ites; they deemed it prudent not to take the Sunnites by surprise in their mosques by introducing just at the beginning of their rule into the Khutbah the words: "Peace be on the Imāms, the ancestors of the Commander of the Faithful, Al-Mu'izz li-Dīn illāh." The building of a mosque, in which the people could be persuaded to learn the Shī'ite

(1) The Mālikites and the Hanbalites pronounce the Bism-illāh in a low voice, because they do not regard it as a part of the Qur'ān, but the Shāfi'ites, the Malikites, and the Shī'ites hold the contrary opinion, and pronounce it aloud. Jashar disapproved of the omission of Bism-illāh in the Khutbah before each chapter.

(2) The prayer known as the "Qunūt" is recited after rising from the first rak'ah, or immediately before assuming that position, when standing generally only in the last of the three last rak'ahs (witr) of the 'Ishā prayer. The simplest Qunūt consists in these words, "Inna laka Qunūtin" Muhammad 'Alī, 'The Holy Qur'ān, Preface, pages XXIV and XXV.

(3) It is only under certain conditions that the Friday Congregational prayers can take place instead of the daily noon prayers. Under these conditions the four rak'ahs of the daily noon prayers are replaced by only two rak'ahs of the Friday Congregational prayers.



doctrines, was put into execution by Jawhar soon after the laying of the foundation of Cairo. On Saturday, 24th Jumādān<sup>lāh</sup> I, 359 he commenced the construction of Al-Azhar,<sup>(1)</sup> and on<sup>1</sup> the 7th of Ramadān, A.H. 361, he celebrated in it the first Friday prayer.<sup>(2)</sup>

As to the additions made to the adhān and the Khutbah after the opening of the Azhar, until the arrival of Al-Mu'izz in Cairo, we know nothing. The additions, which had been made in the adhān and the Khutbah in the Old Mosque, and in Ibn Tulūn's, seem to have been adopted in the Azhar up to the arrival of Al-Mu'izz which marks an elaborate development in the organisation and spread of the Shī'ite propaganda by the Khalifahs themselves.

As Maqrīzī (Ibid, II, 273) tells us, the Khutbah was pronounced by the Fātimid Khalīfahs, Al-Mu'izz and Al-Azīz, in the Azhar until the opening of Al-Hākim Mosque in A.H. 380; since then the Khutbah had been in turns regularly pronounced in the mosques of Āmr, Ibn Tulūn, Al-Hākim and in the Azhar. During the Fātimid period, the Azhar and its minarets were beautifully decorated and brightly lighted on the days assigned to public ceremonies, and this induced Al-Mu'izz to build in his palace a watch-tower, whence he used to sit and watch the decorations. The tower therefore, received the name of the "Watch-Tower of the Azhar."

The Shī'ite propaganda in the Azhar developed extensively under Al-Mu'izz. Soon after his arrival, he gave orders that the following be written on the walls all over Mīsr (Old Cairo).<sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) Al-Azhar (splendid, flowery) assumed its name because it was surrounded by magnificent castles and grand palaces, and because the mosque was supposed to be more splendid than all of them. Some historians assert that it was named after Fātimah, well-known as Az-Zahrā' (the flowery, the conspicuous) from whose name the Fātimids assumed the name by which they were best known.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitat, II. 273

(3) The restriction of the orders to Old Cairo only



"The best of all persons after the Apostle of God (the peace and mercy of God be upon him!) is the Commander of the Faithful, 'Alīdīn Abī Ḥalīb." (1)

On the first day of Muharram A.H. 365 (A.D. 973-74) (2)

Al-Mu'izz conducted the 'Iḍ prayer in the Azhar Mosque.

In the first rak'ah he recited the Fātiḥah followed by the Chapter of 'the Day of Justice' (Sūrat 'ul-Ghāshiyah, Qur'ān, 88) after which he pronounced the words Allāhu Akbar (God is the greatest). Each rak'ah and Sajdah was of a long duration, with the utterance of words expressing God's praise (tasbīḥ), (3)

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implies that Cairo, compared with the Fustāt was still very small, as it consisted only of the Khalīfah's palace, the Azhar Mosque, and a few habitations. Besides the inhabitants of Cairo were more or less Shi'ites as they formed the Khalīfah's bodyguard and retinue.

(1) According to Maqrīṣī (Khitat II. 271), on the authority of the Sharīf Muḥammad b. As'ad, the genealogist, it was Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Imām 'il b. Al-Ḥasan, the Zaydite, who first added to the adhān in A.H. 347 (A.D. 958), during the rule of the Ḥamdānī Sayf'ud-Dawlah in Aleppo, the phrase: "Muḥammad and 'Alī are the best of all human-beings, which is similar to the one ordered to be inscribed by Al-Mu'izz. Later on, in Aleppo, the phrase, "Come to the most excellent work," which is peculiar to the Shi'ites, was also added to the adhān, and the usage of both additions continued until they were abolished by Bar'ud-Dīn Maḥmūd, who, on giving orders to the effect, addressed his fugitives as follows: "Bid them (the Ma'adhḥīn) pronounce the legal adhān; fell to the ground any who objects."

(2) Maqrīṣī, Itt'ās, names it "Masalla-l-Ḥāshirah (the prayer-place of Cairo) and asserts that it was built by Jaḥar. There is no doubt that he means the Azhar Mosque which was also called the Cairo Mosque.

(3) The tasbīḥ (Halleluiah) implies the utterance of the words, "Sami'a-l-lāh-u-lī-wen Homidah;" (Allāh accepts him who gives praise to God). The tasbīḥ is said to have been adopted by Moses and continued till the rise of Christianity. It had been practised during the last third of the night by uttering words expressing God's praise and glory, and the reciting of anthems of divine inspiration, and had been usually accompanied by the tunes of such musical instruments as the violin, the lute, the timbrel, the psalm, etc. In Islām, the tasbīḥ was used in Egypt during Maḥmūd b. Maḥmūd's term of office (A.H. 147-152). In 'Amr's Mosque he built a minaret where he used to sit alone. One night on hearing the Ḥuqūḥ, Maḥmūd complained to the chief Ma'adhḥīn who advised him to give orders to the effect that the Ḥuqūḥ should cease during the later part of the night while the Ma'adhḥīn pronounced



thirty times in each rak'ah or Sajdah. Maqrīzī relates on the authority of Ibn Zūlāq, who said his prayers behind the Khalīfah on that Friday, that he (Ibn Zūlāq) uttered the tasbīh more than thirty times in each rak'ah or Sajdah. The Qādī An-Nu'mān b. Muhammad conveyed the takbīr to the people. An Account is also given of the second rak'ah. Here the Khalīfah recited the chapter of "the Brightness" (Qur'ān<sup>93</sup>) after which he repeated what he had said in the first rak'ah. He also pronounced aloud the "Bism-illāh." In this prayer Al-Mu'izz followed Alī b. Abī Talīb's example. When the prayer was over, Al Mu'izz ascended the pulpit, saluted the people (by uttering the words, "As-salam-u 'Alaykum wa-rahmat-ullāh; the peace and mercy of God be upon you! ) turning his head to the right, then to the left. There lay on the pulpit a heavy silk cushion on which the Khalīfah sat during the interval between the two Khutbahs. On the minbar attended Jawhar, Amr, one of the Katāmah chieftains, and Sharīf, the bearer of the state parasol. The two standards on the pulpit were unfolded and behind them the Khalīfah pronounced the Khutbah, which began with Bism-illāh, uttered in a loud voice, then he pronounced Allāh-u Akbar (repeated twice). The Khutbah was pronounced with solemnity and reverence and so eloquently that he drew tears from men's eyes. When the prayer and the Khutbah were over, the Khalīfah, attended by his four sons, on horseback, and dressed in royal attire, with coats of mail and helmets, and escorted by two elephants, went back to the palace, to which the people were admitted, and there they ate at the Khalīfah's table as much as they pleased. (1)

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the adhan. Ibn Tulūn installed in his palace twelve mukabbirs whose duty it was to utter the takbīr and the tasbīh, to recite the Qur'ān and pronounce the adhan. On each night four of them were to do the work by turns. Grants and gratuities were generously bestowed upon them, and Khumrawnah, Ibn Tulūn's son (A.H. 270-292 A.D. 883-895), confirmed the mukabbirs and continued the bestowal of grants and gratuities upon them. Henceforth, the act of pronouncing the adhan during the night assumed the name of "tasbīh," which, after the Fatimid conquest, became peculiar to the Shi'ites. (Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II. 372-73).

(1) Maqrīzī, Ittī'āz, p. 92.



Further under the Fātimids, the Ashar witnessed a fresh addition to Shī'ite observances. On the death of one of his cousins, Al-Mu'izz recited the funeral service over the body, pronouncing the takbīr seven times. On another occasion he pronounced it five times only, thus following the example of 'Alī ibn-Abī Ṭalīb, who used to pronounce the takbīrāt in proportion to the estimation in which the deceased was held. The Sunnite usage differs in this matter, as they pronounce the takbīr over the dead body five times only (Maqrīṣī Khitāt II. 353).

Again, the 'Id of Al-Ghadīr (Khuma) was celebrated by the same Fātimid Khalīfah for the first time in Egypt. The celebration of this feast will be described in the account of the Maqas Mosque.

It is a special characteristic of the Ashar that it started as a mosque, and gradually developed into a university. In A.H. 378, Al-ʿAzīz devoted it especially to the learned, and from this time it has gradually become the leading university of Islām. The Fātimid Khalīfahs desired to make it so attractive as to draw people from all parts of the world; and in order to encourage students, both natives and foreign, food and lodging were gratuitously offered, and everything possible was done for their comfort. Additions to the buildings and to the grants were made each year, and from small beginnings the Ashar has now developed into a huge educational centre, covering an area of 12,000 square metres, and containing 375 columns.

After the time of the Fātimid Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz, several other rulers made additions to the mosque, and enriched it with grants and foundations, e.g. Al-ʿAzīz was the first who converted the mosque into a university and erected in it an alms-house for 35 reciters of the Qur'ān, who used to gather in the mosque after the Friday service and recite the Qur'ān till the ʿAsr prayer was due. Gratuities were granted to them by the Wazīr, Ya'qūb b. Killis. The volumes in the Darul-Ilm<sup>(1)</sup> were distributed to the

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(1) It is also called Dar-ul-Hikmah (home of wisdom). According to Maqrīṣī (II. 273-74) nearly all the volumes in the Dar-ul-Hikmah were distributed among the above-mentioned 3 mosques.



Mosques of Al-Azhar, the Al-Maqs, and the Al-Hākim; the Azhar receiving <sup>167</sup>350, i.e. about a half of the endowments. The amount of payments assigned to the mu'adhdhins and the attendants of the mosque was mentioned in a document recorded by Maqrīzī (Khitat, II. 273-75), and all possible means were taken to assure the proper use of the mosque. Three silver tannūra and 39 silver chandeliers were at the same time transferred to the mosques of Rāshidah and Al-Azhar; the latter thus receiving two tannūra and 27 chandeliers. In the forefront of the mosque was a silver-arch resembling that in the prayer-niche of the Old Mosque. Both arches, as well as those that had been kept in the other mosques, were carried away by Saladin on 11th Rabi' I, A.H. 569 (A.D. 1173) about two years after the Fātimid Khalīfah came to an end. (1)

Further additions were made to the building under Al-Hākim (A.H. 386-411) (A.D. 996-1020), and further endowments and gifts were granted. (2) In the year A.H. 519 (A.D. 1125) the Fātimid Khalīfah, Al-Amīr built a prayer-niche, with carvings in wood, the inscription of which is still preserved in the Arab Museum in Cairo. With the Ayyūbid rule, a reaction set in, since they, as ardent Sunnites, sought to destroy every trace of the Shī'ah Fātimids. Saladin took from the mosque the right of the Khutbah and deprived it of several of Al-Hākim's endowments. Nearly a century passed before the favour of the rulers and nobles was again bestowed upon it. Al-Malik Az-Zāhir Baybars made new additions to it, took an interest in the instruction given there, and restored to it the privilege of the Khutbah in A.H. 665 (A.D. 1266). Several Amīrs followed his example. From this period onward dates the prosperity of Al-Azhar as a mosque and an educational establishment. When in A.H. 702 (A.D. 1303) the

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(1) Maqrīzī Khitat, II. 273-75.

(2) The mosques of Al-Azhar, Al-Hākim, Rāshidah, and Mār-ul-Ilm shared these grants. (Maqrīzī, II. 273-74).



mosque was damaged by an earthquake the Amīr Salār rebuilt it. From the year A.H. 702, Colleges, or madāris, were built near the mosque, and these were later brought under the Ashar and still belong to it. (1)

(D) Shī'ite Ritual in Other Mosques:

(1) In the Hākim Mosque:

The mosque, which bears the name of Al-Hākim, was founded by Al-Hākim's father, Al-'Azīz in A.H. 379 (A.D. 989) under the auspices of his wazīr, Ya'qūb b. Killis, who laid the foundation on Sunday, 10th Ramadān, A.H. 379, outside Bāb-ul-Fatūh; but, after the extension of Cairo by Baqr-ul-Jamālī, the mosque lay within the circuit of the city. It was called Jāmi'ul-Khutbah (the mosque of the bidding-prayer), and Jāmi'al-Anwar (the resplendent mosque). The Khutbah as well as the reciting of the Qur'ān, which had been confined to the Ashar, were transferred to the Hākim Mosque. Maqrīzī (Khitat II, 277) relates on the authority of Musabbihī that on 4th Ramadān A.H. 381, the Fātimid Khalīfah, Al-'Azīz, conducted the Friday prayer and pronounced the Khutbah in the new mosque. On his way to the mosque he was escorted by more than 3,000 of his bodyguard, and his head was covered with a cap (طیلسات) and he carried a sceptre in the hand. Musabbihī adds that in A.H. 393 (A.D. 905), additions were made to the mosque by Al-Hākim, and in Safar A.H. 403 (A.D. 1012) the building of the mosque was finished. Hangings were suspended on the doorways, four tannūrs and many chandeliers, all of silver, were suspended, the pulpit was fixed, and the floor of the mosque was matted. On Friday 6th Ramadān of the same year, the morning adhān was said in the mosque and Al-Hākim conducted the Friday prayer there. In A.H. 404, Al-Hākim bestowed grants on several mosques, including that of Al-Hākim which received a considerable share of the grants. (2)

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(1) Maqrīzī, Khitat II, 276.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitat II, 277.



In consequence of the earthquake which took place on the 13th of Dhū'l-Qa'dah, 702, the mosque was rebuilt in A.H.703 (A.D.1303-4) (1) under the auspices of the Amir Rukn-ud-Dīn (the prop of the Faith) Beybars who endowed the mosque with certain pious foundations and appointed four faqīhs (jurists) to teach the Jurisprudence (fiqh) of the four Sunnī Schools, as well as other teachers to teach Etymology, Grammar, etc., and founded a magnificent library and appointed several men to teach the Qur'ān and several reciters to recite the Qur'ān by turns. (2)

(2) Shī'ite Ritual in the Kāshidah Mosque:

This mosque derived its name from that of the suburb where it was built. As Maqrīzī relates on the authority of Musabbihī, the construction of the mosque was begun on the 17th of Rabī' II. A.H.398 (A.D.1003-3), on the ruins of a church surrounded by the cemetery of the Christians and the Jews. In Ramadān, A.H.398, the mosque was finished and prepared for prayer. (3)

In Ramadān, A.H.398 (A.D.1007-8), Al-Hakīm recited the Khutbah and conducted the Friday prayer there. In A.H.400 a heavy silver tannūr and several silver chandeliers, were placed in the mosque. In Ramadān, A.H.403, Al-Hakīm conducted the Friday prayer; his head covered with a turban, with no precious stones on it, and he carried a sword, studded with fine silver, and the people were allowed to escort the Khalīfah on his way to and from the mosque. He received petitions, stopping several

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(1) According to Maqrīzī (Khitat, II, 278) many of the shafts of the columns were displaced, the upper parts of the two minarets were ruined, and the walls and ceilings became shaky.

(2) Ibid, II. 278-283.

(3) Ibid, II. 292.



times to listen to each petitioner's complaint. (1)

A remarkable incident in the history of Hāshidah Mosque was the recital of the Khutbah from the pulpit of the mosque on Friday, 11th Jumādā II, A.H. 414, by Abū Ṭalīb Aḥī b. Abd-us-Samī, the Abbāsid, who had been installed by the Chief Qādī, Abū l-Abbās Ahmad b. Muḥammad Al-Anwān, and Ibn Ḥafurah, who had been authorized by the Fatimid Khalīfah, As-Zāhir (A.H. 411-437; A.D. 1021-1038) to recite the Khutbah. The two Khatibs ascended the pulpit, stood one below the other, and simultaneously recited the Khutbah. Abū Ṭalīb, however, was installed as Khatib, and Ibn Ḥafurah was appointed as his sub-Khatib. (2)

### (3) Shī'ite Ritual in the Maqa Mosque:

This mosque was built by the Khalīfah, Al-Ḥakim on the bank of the Nile at Maqa, the port of Hiar. As has already been stated, Al-Ḥakim's endowments were assigned to the mosques of Al-Ḥakim, Al-Ashar, Mār<sup>3</sup> ul-<sup>6</sup> Ilm, and the Maqa Mosque. It was stated in the Charter that the money refunded after the expenditure of the three first places, must be allotted to the Maqa Mosque to which was also attached a considerable number of palm-trees. (3) On 18th Du-l-Hijjah, A.H. 363, the anniversary of the Festival of Ghadir Khumm was for the first time celebrated in Egypt. The gathering of a multitude of Egyptians and Magribite settlers gave satisfaction to the Khalīfah, Al-Mu'izz, when he rode to the Maqa watch-tower, (4) and reviewed the Fleet. On this occasion he

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(1) Ibid, II. 292.

(2) Maqrīṣī, Khitāt, II. 292.

(3) Ibid, II. 303.

(4) According to Maqrīṣī there were three watch-towers in Maqa: one lying between Bab-dh-Dhahab (the gate of gold) and Bab-ul-Bahr (the gate of the sea, meaning the Nile); the other lay on the Arch of Bab-dh-Dhahab, and the third known as "As-Zāhirah" (the shining), Al-Faḥirah (the magnificent), and As-Ḥadirah (the flourishing, beautiful). On celebrating the Feast of Ghadir Khumm the Fatimid Khalīfahs used to sit in one of these watch-towers, while the Waair stood during the ceremony under the Arch of Bab-dh-Dhahab (Khitāt, I. 404).



uttered the two ta widhah<sup>(1)</sup> as a prayer to God to preserve the fleets from evil.<sup>(2)</sup> On the ruins of the last of these watch-towers, Saladin built a huge tower, which he called the Citadel of Maqs, and it lasted till A.H. 770 (A.D. 1368), when a garden was laid out in its place. (Ibid II. 383).

In dealing with the subject of the spread of the Shī'ite ritual in the mosques, we have given as examples the most important mosques, in which the Shī'ite ritual was practised; and it has been shown that the same practice prevailed in all other mosques. However, it should be noted that there were various intervals during which certain terms were abolished from the Khutbah or the adhan. In A.H. 400 (A.D. 1009), the words, "Come to the most excellent work," which Jawhar had ordered to be added to the adhan soon after the establishment of the Fāṭimid rule in Egypt, ceased to be recited. In that year Al-Ḥakim assembled the mu'adhdhins of his palace as well as those of the other mosques to a meeting attended by the Chief Qādī. A decree was issued and read prohibiting the usage of these words in the adhan, and authorising in their place the words, "Prayer is better than sleep" to be pronounced by the mu'adhdhins of the palace during the saying of the words, "Peace be upon the Commander of the Faithful and the mercy

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(1) The word Mu'awwidhāt<sup>a</sup> is an appellation of two chapters of the Qur'ān, which are so called because each of them begins with the words, "Qul A'udhu (say I seek refuge), or because the reciting of them is meant to preserve the reciter from evil. The first ta widhah (Chapter of the Dawn, Qur'ān, 113) runs thus: "Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn, from the evil of what He has created, and from the evil of utterly dark night when it comes, and from the evil of those who cast (evil suggestions) in firm resolutions). The second ta'widhah (Chapter of the men, Qur'ān, 114) runs as follows: "Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, from the evil of the whisperings of the slinking (devil), who whispers into the hearts (Breasts) of men, from among the jinn and the men).

(2) Maqrīzī, Ittī āz, page 93.



of God!" In Rabī' II of the year A.H. 401 (A.D. 1010.) the mu'adhdhins resumed the recital of the words, "Come to the most excellent work." In A.H. 405 (A.D. 1014) the Mu'adhdhins of the Ashar Mosque were ordered to abandon the words, "Peace be upon the Commander of the Faithful" in the adhan, and to introduce in its place, "Prayer, the mercy of God be upon you." (1)

Al-Hakim abolished the custom of kissing the ground before him, and of kissing his hand or stirrup, the reason for this prohibition was, as, Maqrīzī states, that prostration before a human-being was a Byzantine custom. In salutation, Al-Hakim ordered that only these words be used: "Peace be upon the Commander of the Faithful, and the mercy and the blessings of God be upon him!" In correspondence, the following words had to be used, "May the peace, the abundant favour, and the blessings of God be upon the Commander of the Faithful!" In the Khutbah, the following words were pronounced, "O God! may Thy blessing be upon Muhammad the chosen, and may Thy peace be upon 'Alī, the accepted! O God! may Thy blessing be upon the Commanders of the Faithful, the

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- (1) According to Maqrīzī, Bilāl, the Prophets' mu'adhdhin, used to stand by the Prophets' door and pronounce the words, "Peace be upon you, Apostle of God, and the mercy of God and His blessing, come to prayer, come to success, come to prayer, O Apostle of God." When Abu Bakr assumed the Khalifah his mu'adhdhin used to stand by his door and say, "Peace be upon you, Successor of the Apostle of God, and the mercy of God and His blessings, come to prayer, come to success, come to prayer, O Successor of the Apostle of God." At 'Uthman's door, the mu'adhdhin used to pronounce the same words beginning with, "Peace be upon you, O Successor of the successor of the Apostle of God," etc. In order to avoid repetition of the words "Successor" several times in regard to the succeeding Khalifahs, Umar gave orders that the word successor (Khalifah) be replaced by the phrase, "Commander of the Faithful," and that the words, "the mercy of God be upon you" be added to the usual adhan, (According to Maqrīzī, the addition of the last words was ordered by 'Uthman). Since then the mu'adhdhins used to close the adhan by the words, "Peace be upon you" directed to the Khalifahs or their governors. This practice continued during the whole period of the Umayyad Khalifah and during the early period of the Abbāsid empire, when the Khalifahs and their lieutenants used to conduct the daily five prayers themselves. This practice, however, was discontinued by the later Abbāsids, when the Turkish troops held the Khalifah in their power. The



fathers of the Commander of the Faithful. O God! may the best of Thy peace be upon Thy servant and viceroy!"<sup>(1)</sup>

In A.H. 524 (A.D. 1130), Abū 'Alī b. Katīghāt b. Al-Afḡal b. Amīru-l-Jūyush, Badru-l-Jamālī, assumed the title of Vazīr during the Khilāfah of Al-Ḥāfiḡ. The Vazīr put the Khalīfah in custody, took possession of his palace, and got the power of the state in his own hands. As an ardent Imāmī, he made the ritual correspond to the belief in a future Imām, abolished from the adhān such words as, "Come to the most excellent work," and "Muḥammad and 'Alī are the best of human beings," and under him, Ismā'īl b. Ja'far, to whose sect the Isma'īlīan Fāṭimids belonged ceased to be mentioned. But on the death of the Vazīr on 10th Muḥarram, 526, which marks the resumption of the power by the Khalīfah, the adhān was again restored to its former form.

When Saladin assumed power he abolished all the religious rites practised by the Fāṭimids, and in A.H. 567 (A.D. 1171), the words "Peace be upon you, Apostle of God" were only retained in the early morning adhān.<sup>(2)</sup>

(2) Shī'ite Propaganda in the Library of the Royal Palace.

The Fāṭimid Khalīfahs were desirous of acquiring a large number of books for the purposes of spreading the doctrines of their faith. As Ibn-Athīr (VII.14) states, the Mahdī carried with him from Salamiyah all the books and the documents which had belonged to his fathers, but he was robbed of them

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Khalīfahs abandoned the custom of conducting the prayers themselves, and the use of these words ceased. On the part of the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs, who, likewise, did not conduct the prayers, there was no mention of these words except in the early morning adhān. (Khitāt, II.270).

(1) Maqrīzī, Khitāt, II.288.

(2) Ibn Khallikān, I. 389.



in a place called *Aṭ-Ṭāḡīnah* near Tripoli on his way to *Sijilmāsah*. The same historian adds that these books and documents were regained by the Mahdi's son, Abu' l-Qāsim, during his first attempt upon Egypt in A.H. 300 (A.D. 912). Further, as we have already said in dealing with the speech which the Khalīfah Al-Mu'izz delivered to the Katāmah Chieftains not long before the Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt, the Khalīfah had in his royal palace a large square hall with open doors leading to his libraries.

That all or part of these libraries were conveyed to Cairo by Al-Mu'izz is a matter of some doubt. However, before the Fāṭimid conquest, the Sunnīte faith had been predominant in Egypt, and the existence of such a large number of Shī'ah books in the libraries of *Fustāṭ* and the *Qaṭāi'*, is doubtful, especially as there is no clear evidence of there having been any public libraries at all. It seems probable, therefore, that at least a great number of the books, which had been kept in the Khalīfah's libraries at *Qayrawān*, was conveyed with Al-Mu'izz's heavy baggage to Cairo. The early Fāṭimid Khalīfahs and their Vazīrs made special efforts to augment the number of books and were eager to obtain rare and unique copies of MSS. dealing with the various branches of learning, so that the royal library became superior to any other library in the Muslim world. As a patron of learning, Ya'qūb b. Killis<sup>(1)</sup> holds a foremost place among the Fāṭimid Vazīrs.

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(1) In the first part of his life Ibn Killis professed the Jewish religion. He was born at Baghdad. In A.H. 351 (A.D. 942-943) he was chosen by Kāfūr to supervise the furnishing of his palace. He subsequently became Kāfūr's chamberlain, and acted in that capacity, with great honour, discernment, probity, intelligence, and disinterestedness. His master did not fail to notice his conduct, and, having admitted him into his intimacy, he appointed him to a seat



He was fond of learned men, and collected them round him in his residence. Every Thursday night he held a gathering at which he read the works of his own composition. He kept in his palace a number of persons, some of whom were occupied in making copies of the Qur'ān, and others in transcribing books of tradition, jurisprudence, literature, and even medicine; these volumes they collated, adding also to the text vowel sounds and diacritical points. Ya'qūb himself composed a work on jurisprudence containing the Shī'ite doctrines which he had learned from the lips of Al-Mu'izz and his son, Al-'Azīz. In Ramaḡān, A.H. 369 (March-April, A.D. 980), he held a gathering to which people of all ranks were convoked, and there he read to them the contents of his work. A number of persons then held sittings in the Old Mosque, and decided points of law conformably to the principles

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in the privy council, and all business passed through his hands. On Monday, 18th Sha'bān, A.H. 356 (29th July, A.D. 967), he became a convert to the Muslim faith and devoted himself to the practice of prayer and the study of the Qur'ān. Having engaged for a salary a learned man, well acquainted with the august text of the Qur'ān, skilled in grammar, and knowing by heart the grammatical work of Ap-Sīraff (I, 377), he passed the night with him in the recitation of prayers, and the reading of the Qur'ān. His power and position continued to grow until Kāfūr's death, when he was arrested with all the clerks and chiefs of the public offices by the Vazīr Ibn'ul-Furāt, whose jealousy and enmity he had excited. By the intervention of his friends, he obtained his liberty from the Vazīr, and, on leaving prison, borrowed money from his brother, packed it up, and departed secretly for the Maghrib. With the Fātimids, he rose into such favour that he became the Vazīr of Al-'Azīz, and obtained a high place in his esteem. He reorganised the administration of the empire, directed with ability the conduct of affairs, and on 18th Ramaḡān, A.H. 366 (19th April, A.D. 979), was nominated Vazīr (Ibn Munjib, pages 19....22).



enunciated in that work. <sup>(1)</sup>

The library of the palace probably benefitted much from the zeal of Ibn Killis as a collector, if it is true that a great number of books were removed thither from the Wazīr's residence after his death.

As Maqrīzī (Khitāṭ, I, 409) states on the authority of Ibn uṭ-Ṭawayyir, the library was in a section of the Old Hospital (Al-Māristām-l-Atīq), which formed a part of the royal palace. It had a number of shelves divided into sections, each having a door. In the library there were more than 200,000 bound volumes, besides a few loose ones. These volumes dealt with jurisprudence of the various sects, the Arabic language, traditions, history, biographies, Astrology, Theology, Chemistry, etc. In addition to these, a great number of copies of the Qur'ān was placed on the shelves, and there were to be found scrolls (rolls) in the hand-writing of Ibn Muqlah, Ibn al-Bawwāb and other well-known calligraphists. Whenever the Khalīfah visited the library, he dismounted, then walked along a raised platform on which he took his seat. The librarian brought to him such copies of the Qur'ān, of various sizes, and volumes on other subjects, as he recommended for purchase. The Khalīfah would approve of such copies as he considered should be added to the library. <sup>(2)</sup>

Maqrīzī states (Khitāṭ, I, 409) on the authority of the author of Adh-Dhakhīr (the treasures) that there were in the

(1) Ibn Munjib, page 33.

Maqrīzī (Khitāṭ, II, 341) gives a brief account of this work of Ibn Killis and says that he himself possessed the MS which deals with the jurisprudence of the Imā'īlian sect.

(2) Ibid, II, 409.



palace forty libraries; one of these containing 18,000<sup>(1)</sup> books on ancient subjects.

Again, Muqaddasī says on the basis of Ibn Abī Tayy's account of the palace after the fall of the Fātimid Khalīfah, that the royal library was included in the contents of the palace which the Ayyūbids under Saladin sold. The author describes the library as one of the wonders of the world. "It is said", says Ibn Abī Tayy, "that there had never existed in the Muslim world a library of such importance as the one that had existed in the royal palace of Cairo; among its marvellous possessions were 1320 copies of Aṭ-Ṭabarī's Annals; it is also said that it contained more than 600,000 volumes, besides an enormous variety of examples of hand-writing attributed to various calligraphists."<sup>(2)</sup>

Indeed, the Fātimid Khalīfahs had shown great zeal adding to their library as many copies as possible of the same book, in order that the rival libraries of Baghdad and Cordova might not get a chance of acquiring them. The result was that this library possessed a great number of copies of certain books, which were not to be found in any other library. Masabbihī states that on one occasion the name of the book entitled 'Al-'Ayn' by Al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, was mentioned in the presence of the Khalīfah, Al-'Azīz. By the Khalīfah's order, the librarian brought into his presence more than thirty copies of this work, including a copy of a MS. in Al-Khalīl's own hand-writing. On another occasion a man carried to the

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(1) The number of volumes must have exceeded 18,000, as some of these books may have consisted of more than one volume.

(2) Muqaddasī, Kitābu-r-Rawdatīn, I. 200. The same writer adds on the authority of Imādu-d-Dīn Iṣfahānī that there were 2,000,000 volumes in this library.



Khalifah a copy of Tabari's Annals, which he had bought for a hundred dinars. On receiving orders from the Khalifah, the librarian brought up more than twenty copies of the same book, of which one was in the hand-writing of Tabari himself. Again, the name of the book entitled "Al-Jamharah" by Ibn Durayd was mentioned in the same Khalifah's presence; more than a hundred copies of the same book was produced.<sup>(1)</sup>

Al-Mu'izz founded an academy on the lines of similar institutions already existing at Baghdad and elsewhere. This new foundation was named Daru-l-Hikmah (the house of wisdom). To it was attached a number of professors, both of the traditional sciences, and of 'an and canon law, and also of the natural sciences. A library, with the name of Dar al-'Ilm<sup>(1)</sup> was connected with it, and was filled with a great number of books on various branches of knowledge which had been removed to it from the library of the royal palace near by. All persons were allowed to use the books of this library for the purpose of reading, consultation, copying, and study, and they were

(1) NaqrTaf, Khitāṭ, I. 400.

In A.H. 400, Al-Mu'izz ordered the assembling of a conference of the eminent mathematicians, logicians, doctors of canon law, doctors of medicine, etc. in his royal palace for the purpose of holding debates in his presence, and he conferred grants upon those who presented them with robes of honor.

(1) As NaqrTaf states, the number of books removed from the royal palace to Daru-l-'Ilm, was by far greater than any that had ever existed in any other library (Khitāṭ, I. 400).

(2) NaqrTaf, Khitāṭ, I. 455 and II. 363 - on the authority of Khitāṭ.

(3) The regular meetings of the conference of the "House of Wisdom" were ordered to be held in the palace. The change of abode of the part of Al-Mu'izz, is not surprising since his official career is marked by his orders after his mind became disordered and his policy is fluctuating (NaqrTaf, Khitāṭ, I. 455 - on the authority of Khitāṭ).



Dāru-l-'Ilm (the home of learning):

The Fāṭimid Khalīfahs were anxious to encourage scholarship in accordance with the tenets of the Shī'ah faith. The Ashar mosque had been placed at the disposal of the learned by the Khalīfah, Al-'Aziz, under the auspices of his great Wazīr, Ya'qūb b. Killis, and many volumes of MSS, as well as many copies of the Qū'an, were removed to it and to several other mosques. In Jumādā II. 395, (A.D. 1005) Al-Hākim founded an academy on the lines of similar institutions already existing at Baghdad and elsewhere. This new foundation was named Dāru-l-Hikmah (the house of wisdom). To it was attached a number of professors, both of the traditional sciences, and Qū'an and canon law, and also of the natural sciences. A library, with the name Dār'ul-'Ilm<sup>(1)</sup> was connected with it, and was filled with a great number of books on various branches of knowledge which had been removed to it from the library of the royal palace near by. All persons were allowed to use the books of the library for the purpose of reading, consultation, copying, and study, and they were supplied with ink, pens, paper, and rests for books.<sup>(2)</sup>

In A.H. 403, Al-Hākim ordered the assembling of a conference of the eminent mathematicians, logicians, doctors of canon law, doctors of medicine, etc. in his royal palace for the purpose of holding debates in his presence, and he conferred grants upon them and invested them with robes of honour<sup>(3)</sup>

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(1) As Maqrīzī states, the number of books removed from the royal palace to Dāru-l-'Im, was by far greater than any that had ever existed in any other library (Khitāṭ, I. 458).

(2) Maqrīzī (Khitāṭ, I.458 and II. 342 - on the authority of Musabbihī)

(3) The regular meetings of the conference of the "House of Wisdom" soon ceased to be held in the palace. This change of attitude on the part of Al-Hākim, is not surprising, since his officials ceased to carry out his orders after his mind became disordered and his policy so fluctuating (Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, I. 458 - on the authority of Musabbihī)



The library remained open to the public until A.H. 516 (A.D. 1122) when it was closed by Al-Afdal b. Amīr'īl-Juyūsh, Badrū-l-Jamīlī. A report was submitted to him to the effect that it was frequented by two men, belonging to a sect called the Badī'ites, and attached to the three Sunni schools, viz. Shāfi'ites, Ḥanīfites, and Malīkites, and that many persons, including two ustādh's in the service of the royal palace, listened to them and adhered to their doctrines. Accordingly, the library was closed, as the purpose of its foundation was the promulgation of Shī'ah doctrines, and some of the persons involved in this affair were beheaded. But after the death of Al-Afdal, the Khālīfah, Al-Āmir bi-Aḥkāmī-illāh (A.H. 495-524; A.D. 1101-1131) ordered the library of Dārū-l-'Ilm to be re-opened. One of these two leaders of the Badī'ite sect, Ḥamīdū'l-Qaṣṣār, however, resumed his visits to the library, and claimed to possess divine qualities, and his claims were accepted by several Shī'ites. He was acquainted with the doctrines of Abu'l-Ḥasan il-Ash'arī, but later on he adopted the heretical opinions of Al-Ḥallāj. (1)

But the great library in the royal palace, and the vast number of books used in Dārū-l-'Ilm and in other mosques, were doomed to suffer the same ill fortune as befell the Fāṭimid Khilāfah during the reign of Al-Mustanṣir (A.H. 427-487; A.D. 1035-1095), and after the fall of the Fāṭimids. In the crisis due to the famine which lasted for several years during Al-Mustanṣir's khilāfah, the books in the royal palace and in Dārū-l-'Ilm almost entirely disappeared. As many as 2,400 copies of the Qu'ān, beautifully written and gilded, were taken out of the library and given up to the Turks in exchange for their dues which had been in

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(1) Naqirizī, Khitāt, I. 460.



arrears. All the books in the outer library practically disappeared; however, in the inner library, which was not so easily accessible, there were left boxes of reed-pens, sharpened and trimmed by Ibn Muqlah, Ibmū-l-Bawwāb, and other well-known calligraphists. Further, "on the first ten days of Muharram, A.H. 461 (A.D.1010)" says the author of Adh-Dhakhā'ir, on whose authority Maqrizī gives this account, "I saw twenty-five camels loaded with books removed from the library of the royal palace to the home of the Wazir, Abu-l-Far'aj Muḥammad b. Ja'far Al-Maghribī, and, on inquiring about the books, I was told that they were being taken to the home of the Wazir and to that of Al-Khatir ibmū-l-Muwaffaq in compensation for the dues which were in arrear to them and to their pages and negro-slaves". "An expert on books", continues the eye-witness, told me that the books, carried to the Wazir's home in exchange for 5,000 dinārs, were worth more than 100,000 dinārs<sup>(1)</sup> (at least twenty times as much).

Moreover, the books in Dāru-l-'Ilm, and those others which 'Imādu d-Dawlah b. Abu-l-Afdal b. al-Muḥtariq conveyed to Alexandria (they were taken to the Maghrib after his death), and those taken by the Banū Lawātah, were all severe losses to the libraries. Again, a considerable number of books was either bought or plundered or carried down the Nile to Alexandria in and after the year A.H. 461 (A.D.1068-9). "This huge number of books", adds the same author, "such as could not be found in any other country of the same degree of correctness, beautiful handwriting, fine covers, and rarity, was plundered by the negro-slaves, who made out of the covers slippers and shoes, then gave up the folios to the flames. With shameless audacity they defended their action by stating

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(1) Maqrizī, Khitāṭ, I. 408.



that they did so because these books contained the doctrines of the population of the East (meaning the Sunnites)<sup>(1)</sup>. In a word, the books, which had existed in the library of the royal palace and also in Dār-ul-'Ilm were either plundered, ruined, sank in the Nile, carried to various countries or burnt. There were so many volumes abandoned to the mercy of the wind and the dust, that the heaps so formed were known as titāl ul-Kutub (the hills of books)<sup>(2)</sup>.

The calamities, which had befallen the library of the palace and that of Dār-ul-'Ilm, took place in A.H. 461 and several years after. But at the time of the fall of the Fāṭimid Khilāfah, that is to say, about a century after the years A.H. 461-65, there was still a large library in the royal palace of Al-'Ādid, the last of the Fāṭimid khalīfahs. During this period, the library seems to have regained a part of its former splendour either by the restoration of some of the books which had been taken from it, or by the addition of a great number of new ones. For, as all historians assert, there was in the year A.H. 567 (A.D. 1171), a great library in the royal palace of the last Fāṭimid Khalīfah, and this library was sold by Ibn Sūrah, an expert on books, who was entrusted with the task of selling it, and the sale took several years. There survived only such books as had been conveyed to the Fāḍiliyyah School, founded in A.H. 580 by the Qāḍī, 'Abd-ur-Raḥīm b. 'Alī Al-Baysānī<sup>(3)</sup>. Maqrīzī,

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(1) Ibid, I. 409. (2) Ibid, I. 409.

(3) He was a Shāfi'ite. His father was invested with the office of Qāḍī of Baysān (a town on the Jordan in Syria, lying between Hūrān and Palestine), from which word he derived his name "Al-Baysānī". He was the scribe (Khatib) of Asadu-d-Dīn Shīrkāh, and supported Saladin in abolishing the Fāṭimid Khilāfah, after which he was nominated Wazīr and counsellor. He held this office until the year A.H. 596 (A.D. 1199) in which he died on his way to fight against Al-Malik-ul-'Ādil b. Ayyūb, who was at that time advancing from Syria for the invasion of Egypt. (Ibn Khallikān, I. 357.... 59; Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, I. 409.)



(Khitāṭ, II. 366) quotes an estimate of the number of the volumes kept in the library of this school, as amounting to 100,000, but they perished altogether in A.H. 694 (A.D. 1194-5) when famine raged in Egypt and the volumes were carried off by the pupils who sold each volume for a piece of bread. Historians, however, are not in agreement as to the actual number of books in the library of the royal palace. Ibn Wāṣil (Bib. Nat. 1770, fol. 32b) gives the number as more than 120,000. His statement, however, differs from those of Ibn Abī Tayy, and Ibnu-ṭ-Ṭuwayyir, <sup>and</sup> Isfahānī<sup>(1)</sup> who have respectively given 200,000 and 600,000 and 2,000,000. According to Maqrīzī (Khitāṭ, II, 366), 100,000 volumes were removed from the library of the royal palace, after the fall of the Fāṭimid khilāfah and deposited in the Fāḍiliyyah School, which was founded in A.H. 580 (A.D. 1184). This statement, evidently makes Ibn Wāṣil's estimate quite untrustworthy. Again, the number given by Ibnu-ṭ-Ṭuwayyir is three times as big as that of Ibn Abī-Tayy, while the number given by Isfahānī is ten times as big as that <sup>by Ibn Abī Tayy</sup> given. But, if we deduct the number of books which Al-Baysānī took from the library, i.e. 100,000 from the total number given by Ibn Abī Tayy, i.e. 200,000, the remainder which had to be sold by Ibn Sūrah, the book-seller, within several years, would be too small, especially when we understand that one school, viz. the Fāḍiliyyah, received half of the whole number of books. Further, Ibn Muṣassar states in his

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(1) Muqaddasī states on the authority of 'Imādu-d-Dīn Al-Isfahānī that the purchase of the possessions of the royal palace took about ten years, and that two days a week were assigned to the auction of books which were sold at very low prices. The various books, some consisting of fifty parts, were scattered here and there so that it was not possible to collect together all the parts of the same book. The same author adds that these volumes were sold according to weight (Muqaddasī, Rawḍatūn, I. 268).



'Annals of Egypt' (page 57) that on the death of Al-Afdal ibn Amiri-l-Juyūsh (A.H. 515, A.D. 1121) the Khalīfah, Al-Amir confiscated all his possessions, which included 500,000 volumes, all of which were removed to the royal palace.

It is not easy, therefore, to give a precise figure for the number of books, when we recognize that the estimates given by various historians refer to different occasions, namely, before and after the crisis due to the famine which took place during the khilāfah of Al-Mustanṣir, (A.H. 461-465) and also before and after the fall of the Fāṭimid khilāfah (A.H. 567). From what has already been stated, the number 800,000 given by Ibnu-ṭ-Ṭuwayyir seems to be nearer the actual number of books, at least shortly before these two incidents. Speaking generally, there certainly was, in the royal palace of Cairo and in Dāru-l-'Ilm a great number of books for the purpose of fostering the Shī'ite doctrines and initiating the people into the Shī'ite tenets, since the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs made special efforts to augment the number of books and get hold of many unique and rare copies, until the library of the royal palace rivalled and even surpassed all other libraries of the Muslim world.(1)

The disappearance of this great number of books from the libraries of the royal palace and Dāru-l-'Ilm has made it too hard for those who investigate the history of the Fāṭimids in Egypt to be fully acquainted with the history of the great Fāṭimid empire. The Ayyūbids, who were fervent anti-Shī'ites and zealous Sunnites, not only attempted to

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(1) In his account of the library of Al-Hakam II. of Spain, Prof. Nicholson says, "The tenth century of the Christian era is a fortunate and illustrious period in Spanish history..... Hakam was an enthusiastic bibliophile. He sent his agents in every direction to purchase manuscripts, and collected 400,000 volumes in his palace, which was thronged with librarians, copyists, and book-binders" (A Literary History of the Arabs, page 419).



abolish the Shi'ite ritual, but they also blotted out every trace of Fāṭimid civilisation and culture.

(3) Shi'ite Propaganda in the Royal Palace:

The Chief Dā'ī was one of the officials of high status under the Fāṭimids. In rank, he was next to the Chief Qādī, but in uniform they were alike. In many cases, the combined office of chief qādī and Chief Dā'ī was entrusted to one man.(1)

A large section of the royal palace was assigned to the Chief Dā'ī who was assisted by twelve naqibs, and was represented by many other du'āh all over the country. The doctors of the Dārū-l-'Ilm were attached to his office and were always in touch with him. Every Monday and Thursday, they submitted to him such lectures as they intended to deliver, and it is interesting to note out that these lectures had to be finally approved by the Khalifah who communicated his decision through the Chief Dā'ī.(2)

The Chief Dā'ī himself held gatherings to which he read out allocutions of his own composition. In the Grand Iwān (Al-Iwānu-l-Kabīr), he sat on the so-called Kursī-d-Da'wah and lectured to a gathering of men. Women also had their share in this initiation into the doctrines of the Ismā'īlian sect, and, in the Da'wah Conference (Majlisu-d-Da'wah), a special gathering for them was held. But this was not all. Maqrizī states on the authority of Ibnu 'Abdī-ṣ-Ṣāḥir that in the royal palace the conferences for the propagation of the da'wah were held as follows, according to the various classes of people:

- (1) The members of the family of 'Alī.
- (2) Men of high status.

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(1) Maqrizī, Khitāṭ, I. 391.

(2) Ibid, I. 391.



(3) Persons attached to the royal palaces.

(4) The public generally and strangers who came from the provinces or foreign lands.

In the Azhar Mosque, other gatherings were attended by women, some being specially reserved for the wives of the persons attached to the royal palaces and other ladies of high rank.<sup>(1)</sup>

At the end of the lectures, the audience kissed the Chief Dā'ī's hand, and the latter wiped their heads with the part of the copy of his lecture bearing the khalīfah's signature. Among the Chief Dā'ī's functions was the collection of the najwā<sup>(2)</sup> (subscription) from the adherents of the Ismā'īlian faith, and the names of those who paid more than was required were registered by him. In the 'Īdu-l-Fitr, an abundant sum of money was collected, and a part of it went into the treasury.<sup>(3)</sup>

The assignment of a large section of the royal palace to the Chief Dā'ī seems to have been introduced by the *early* Fātimids. In Rabī' II. A.H. 385 (A.D.995), during the khalīfah of Al-'Azīz, the Chief Qādī, Muḥammad b. An-Nu'mān, was offered a professorial chair in the royal palace, where he lectured on the jurisprudence of Ahlu-l-Bayt in the same way as his brother, Al-Husayn, had done in Cairo and his father in the Maghrib. Maqrīzī tells us that the gathering was so thronged that eleven men were trodden to death.<sup>(4)</sup>

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(1) Ibid, I. 391.

<sup>a</sup>(2) Maqrīzī adds that this subscription was 3-1/3 dirhems and that some wealthy persons paid 33-2/3 dīnārs for which they received a distinguished place in the mahwīl (and a letter bearing the khalīfah's signature in which he said: "May God bless you, your wealth, children, and religion". The same author goes on to state that these persons kept such charters as a blessing of which they were very proud. (Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, I. 391).

(3) Ibid, I. 391.

(4) Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, II. 341-342.



Under Al-Ḥākim, the Shī'ite propaganda met with considerable success. As a result of this Khalīfah's vigorous laws, many people were compelled to profess the Shī'ite faith, and two days a week were appointed for the purpose.<sup>(1)</sup>

Again, Maqrīzī states that on 16th Rajab, A.H.397 (A.D. 938), 'Abdu-l-'Azīz b. An-Nu'mān, Chief Qādī, was dismissed by Mālik b. Sa'īdī-l-Fāriqī, and had to hand over to him 'Kutubu-d-Da'wah' (the Books of the Propaganda), which had been read to the gatherings usually assembled in the royal palace.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Kutubu-d-Da'wah, to which Maqrīzī here refers, are undoubtedly works such as those of Abū Ḥanīfah An-Nu'mān and Ya'qūb b. Killis; and Maqrīzī was himself in possession of a copy of the latter work, since he gives a description of it, as has already been stated.

Reference must be also made to another important document, a MS. in the Cairo Royal Library, entitled "Rasā'ilu-l-Ḥākim bi-Amr-illāh wa-l-Qā'imīna bi-Da'watih" (The treatises of Al-Ḥākim bi-Amr-illāh and of those who conducted the promulgation of his propaganda)<sup>(3)</sup>.

We are in doubt as to whether the MS in the Royal Library in Cairo is another copy of the first volume of the four MSS. consulted by De Sacy in his *Exposé de la Religion des Druzes and Chrestomathie Arabe*. In his 'Exposé' De Sacy states that he only consulted such MSS. on the Druzes as he found in the libraries of Europe", *je ne puis, dispenser de faire connaître sommairement ces différents écrits, et d'indiquer les manuscrits des diverses bibliothèques de*

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(1) Ibid, II. 286

(2) Ibid, II. 286

(3) This MS. of 64 folios, contains twenty treatises, Royal Library, Cairo, Theology of the Shī'ah, MS. 20.



l'Europe dans lesquels ils se trouvent".<sup>(1)</sup> However, this is not a matter of importance, since in our dealing with the MS. in the Royal Library of Cairo, we cite only as examples such accounts as have neither been translated nor dealt with in detail by De Sacy or any other historian.

The MSS. consulted by De Sacy exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale under Nos. 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583 (Ancien fonds, i.e. 1408, 1415, 1427, 1429 respectively), and bear the title

كتاب المشاهد والأسرار التوحيدية لمولانا

(The book on the testimonies and the secrets of the unitarian religion, of our lord (Al-Hākim)).<sup>(2)</sup> The first volume of this work contains twenty-six treatises, sixteen of which bear the same titles - with slight variations - as those of the Cairo MS., but only four treatises were translated by De Sacy<sup>(3)</sup> while the others are only dealt with in brief outline with a summary of the contents, an explanation of the heading of each treatise and a mention of the date<sup>(4)</sup> at which it was written.

An account of the methods in which the propaganda was spread by the Fāṭimid Khalifahs and their supporters may be given from the Cairo MS., which sets out clearly Al-Hākim's claim to divinity. . A large section of the royal palace

(1) De Sacy, Exposé, t. I. cccc. liv.

(2) Ibid., t. I. cccclix.

(3) Chrestomathie Arabe, t. II. 209-226.

(4) Exposé, t. I. ccccxii - ccccxiii.

The dates are given according to the era of Hamzah b. 'Alī the Waliyyu-z-Zamān, and the Qā'imū-z-Zamān (the lieutenant of the time). De Sacy, Chrestomathie Arabe, t. II. 246, n. 71. The first year of the era of Hamzah corresponds to the year A.H. 408. (De Sacy, Chrestomathie Arabe, t. II. 246, n. 73). Hamzah is also called the Imām <sup>والإمام حمزة بن علي</sup> (Roy. Lib., Cairo, MS. 20, fol. 21b) The Qā'imū-z-Zamān and the Wali, i.e. Hamzah b. 'Alī, is also set clear in the nineteenth treatise of the Cairo MS. (fol. 49b.) <sup>وتوكلت إليه بولاية قائم الزمان حمزة بن علي</sup>



became the centre of the Fāṭimid propaganda, and there lectures were regularly given by the Chief Dā'ī and his assistants. The language in which these treatises are written shows that opposition was expected and was actually anticipated, for to the majority of the Egyptians, these treatises must have been most objectionable.

وتنزه عن سوء الظنونه ما إشتهر ذلك أنه لا غاب عنوا به قطبة  
المرساة العجز والدمع والنظام (1)

According to this MS., these treatises were read out after Ad-Darazī had first initiated the audience into Al-Ḥākim's new doctrines, and in the year A.H.408 (A.D. 1017), Al-Ḥākim asserted 'his divine nature after having appeared in his human nature only'.

فلما قام مولانا الحاكم بصورة التوحيد  
الكشف المكشوف ما إشتهر الإقيامه في الكشف (2) سنة ثمانه وإربعائة  
أكشف المكشوف يعني التوحيد واستمر مكشوفاً من غيبة الباري  
(2)

The treatises are based on philosophical views of purely Bāṭinid and Mu'tazilite nature. "Philosophy is the origin of religious law" which, under Al-Ḥākim, took the place of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. Another characteristic of this MS. is that the Chief Dā'ī was assisted by 151 du'āh

إله العباد أحد وضمونه ومائة (3)

besides the part of the Fāṭimid propaganda conducted by the Mu'adhdhins and the Khatībs of the mosques.

The first treatise, which bears no title, and serves, as it appears, as an introduction to the following treatises, deals with the theological views, which were at that time

(1) Rasā'ilu-l-Ḥākim bi-Amr-illāh, Theology of the Shī'ah, Roy. Lib. Cairo, MS. 20, fol. 43.

(2) The word كشوف indicates the interval intervening between the disappearance of Al-Ḥākim until his return and the public manifestation of his religion. As De Sacy (Chrestomathie Arabe, t. II. 275, n.144), this period is called 'Kashf' according to the books of the Druzes.

(3) Ibid, fol. 4b. states



introduced under Al-Hākim. "The world", says the author", is the exponent of the sacred law, because the exponent of the Truth is the Imām, the one, the infallible, who is far above all creatures, the originator of all, i.e. the ten - the Five<sup>(1)</sup> are the ordinances (ḥudūd)<sup>(2)</sup> of the truth, and the (other) Five, the ordinances of the sacred law; he is the causer of their cause, and the cause is the Universal Intelligence, and he is the source of the particular form of their religion.<sup>(3)</sup>

العالم ناطقة الشريعة لله تعالى حقيقة  
الإنسان ، وهو منبع الكل ما يعني المشرق : الحق حيدر الله  
والحق حيدر الله ، وعلى علمه (4) ، والعلة العقل الكلية ما مصدر  
صدره من النبوة

(5)

(1) These five ordinances of the Truth were: 'Abdu-r-Rahīm, the Crown Prince of the Khilāfah, 'Abbās, Khatkīn, the Dā'ī, Ja'far, and Ahmad b. Al-'Awwām, the Chief Qādī (Roy. Lib., Cairo, MS. 20, fol. 2 b).

According to De Sacy (Bib. Nat., MS.1408,) treatise No.XVII, entitled At-Tanzīh (infallibility), the five rival ministers were: 'Abdu-r-Rahīm b. Ilyās, 'Abbās b. Shu'aib, the Dā'ī Khatkīn, Ja'far, surnamed Ad-Ḍarīr (the blind), Ahmad b. Al-'Awwām, Chief Qādī (Exposé, t. I. ccclxxii seq.)

(2) According to De Sacy, in the religious style of the Druzes, the word ḥudūd indicates - by an allegory based on the Qur'ān - the principal ministers who form the religious hierarchy of this sect. The *أقامة الحدود* accordingly, indicates the institutions of the principal ministers of the Druze sect (Chrestomathie Arabe, t.II.199 and 242, n.45). The word ḥudūd is well explained by De Sacy (Chrestomathie Arabe, t.II.275, n.147) who thinks that under the title

*شرح الحدود* the author refers to the eighteenth treatise of the Arabic MS. of the Royal Library (No.1581, ancient fonds - No.1415, Bib.Nat.) the full title of which is

*معرفة الأوامر وأسرار الحدود العلوية والباطنية وما يتبعها*  
(A treatise on the knowledge of the Imām and the 'Alid ministers both in the spiritual and the bodily order).

(4) According to De Sacy (Chrestomathie Arabe, t.II. 219 and 274, n.136), Ḥamzah b. 'Alī is the cause of creation. In the hierarchy of the unitarian ministers, the first is sometimes called the 'Intelligence', sometimes 'the causer of causes', to whom all existing things owe their existence. De Sacy goes on to say that Al-Hākim, the supreme God, is sometimes called 'the efficient cause of the cause of causes (la cause efficiente de la cause des causes). Yet De Sacy's statement is not decisive, for he says that these terms are not purely Druze, but are also common in the metaphysical Muslim sects (Ces idées ne sont pas exclusivement propres aux Druzes: ceux-ci les ont prises des Ismaéliens, et je crois qu'elles sont communes à métaphysique des plusieurs sectes Musulmanes).

(3) Roy. Lib., Cairo, MS.20, fol. 1 a.

(5) " " " " " 2 b.



"The object of this book", adds the author, "is to set forth briefly such subtle arguments as will establish the falsity of the doctrine of those who believe that our Lord is (merely) the exponent and the foundation".

(1) ... أنه يذكر في هذا الكتاب بالاختصار الدقائق في إبطال قول من قالوا لا إله إلا هو  
الناظم والذات ما تم ذكره في الحجج القوية التي هي السبيل  
(2)

The Dā'ī then explains the word 'Imām' which, according to him, stands for Dhū Ma'ah, the Universal Intelligence, the one who teaches and appoints the inferior Imāms, whose duty it is to represent him in the promulgation of his propaganda.

لأنه السبيل الحقيقي هو الإمام الأعظم ... الذي هو العقل الكلي  
... إله الإمام الكلي هو الذي يربي الدعاة ... يأخذونه يعلم  
يعني الدعاة

In the second treatise (Risālatu-n-Nisā') addressed to the women, the Dā'ī emphasises the danger of polytheism and advocates the necessity of the belief in the unity of Al-Hākim, the creator, the giver (3)

الخالفه التزاهي (3)  
وكذلك إذا علمت أن العلم بالشيء (4)

(1) According to De Sacy, each Prophet or "Speaker" (Nātiq) is succeeded by seven Imāms (called Sāmī, "Silent"), of whom the first (called Asās, "Foundation"; or Sūs, "Root", "Origin") is always the intimate companion of the Nātiq, and the repository of his ascetic teaching. The Nātiq and the Asās are Muḥammad and 'Alī who are only servants of Al-Hākim, represented by 'Abdu-r-Rahīm b. Ilyās and 'Abbās b. Shu'aib ("Dans un autre écrit de Ḥamza, daté de la même année - A.H. 409 - et intitulé رسالة التنزيه (a treatise on the infallibility of Al-Hākim) on lit un passage remarquable. L'auteur veut prouver que Notre-Seigneur, c'est-à-dire Hakem, n'a rien de commun avec le Natek et l'Asas, c'est-à-dire Mahomet and Ali, ni avec leurs doctrines, c'est-à-dire le mahométisme littéral ou Tenzil, et la doctrine allégorique serviteurs de Notre-Seigneur, représentés par Abd-Abrahim, fils d'Élyas, et Abbas, fils de Schoaib (Chrestomathie Arabe, t.II.238, n.23). In his treatise on 'Women' (Roy. Lib., Cairo, MS. 20, fol.10b), the author refers to 'Abdu-r-Rahīm and 'Abbās as the Nātiq and the Asās:

المترابيه سورنا بل دعاء تلكم الدنيا فبته بهنبيه التسمية انما انما  
والذات ما يعني لصيد الرقيم وعتايب

- (2) Ibid, fol. 1b.  
(3) Ibid, fol. 12b.  
(4) Ibid, fol. 11b.



are what constitutes religion والممار بالدين لنا المجالى uments

والسجلات (1) This implies that under Al-Hākim, the

والسجلات (1) This implies that under Al-Hākim, the Muslim religion had been abolished and replaced by another based on the initiation of his Dā'is and expounded in the conferences of Wisdom and the documents which were to take the place of the Qur'ān and the Traditions.

The second Treatise also shows that the Conferences of Wisdom were held for the initiation of certain people into the Bāṭinid faith, probably in order to avoid the opposition of the great mass of the population. Yet, as it appears from the same treatise, a feeling of dissatisfaction was manifesting itself among the Egyptians. The Chief Qādī, 'Abdu-l-'Azīz b. An-Nu'mān, did not approve of this new policy of Al-Hākim, and, therefore he was dismissed in A.H. 398 (A.D. 1007) by MElik b. Sa'īd. In this treatise, Ibn An-Nu'mān is reviled. Further, Al-Fāriqī's achievements for the da'wah were not a success. He was also dismissed on the ground of his disbelief in the religion of Al-Hākim, as well as for being guilty of laying hands on the property of orphans.

لده المجالى با طينه لا تقرا على كل الناس ..... وعبد العزيز طه  
قاضى مصر ، ثم بعد تولى ماله به سيد قضا مصر .....  
فنفذوا اقدام تيسر من تيسر بنى أمية ، فوجدناه عبد العزيز كبره  
النعمان ..... ولعبد العزيز في أيام العزيز أيضا إلهام الحاكم  
وعمره سنة ثمان وتسعين وثلاثمائة وولى ماله به سيد  
آكل أموال الديار والثمرى من دينه الحسنه (2)

As a result of this policy of Al-Hākim, the cessation

(1) Ibid, fol. 10 b.

(2) Ibid, fol. 8 b.



varying of these "Conferences of Wisdom" in A.H. 403 (A.D. 1012)<sup>(1)</sup> was inevitable. The hostile feeling of the majority of the people, and the disapproval of men of high status hindered the success of the Fāṭimid propaganda under Al-Ḥākim, for he boldly urged the abolition of the laws of all religions and demanded belief in his own religion, which the Fāṭimid propagandists now gave out to be based on the treatises read out in the Conferences of Wisdom.

- وانقطة المجالس ... أهل التآويل والقاويل الباطلة من جهة الجاهل  
(2) ذكره الكاتب  
وهذه الفصول التي تقدمت جميعها تثيرا بطلان الشرائع ودرع  
(3) الركوع من له أساس ...  
(4) والمراد بالاسم هنا المجالس والسيرات.

The thirteenth treatise, entitled Al-Munājāh (the soliloquy), includes a number of prayers which had to be pronounced by the believers in the Conference of Wisdom. The dā'ī propagates the divinity of Al-Ḥākim and lays stress on his eternity <sup>سرمدي الثبات</sup> (5) and on other attributes, usually applied to God. According to the author of this treatise, Al-Ḥākim was the supreme being <sup>فرد رب العالمين مولا</sup> (6) the master of this world and of the world to come <sup>فأنت صاحب</sup> (7) <sup>العالمين واما الدنيا فابواب ملكهم الآخرة</sup> (8) <sup>بارئ البرايا</sup> and the creator of all beings. No doubt the aim of the dā'ī was to induce the people to accept the religion of Al-Ḥākim, and express disbelief in all other religions, looking upon them as vain and false <sup>بشرائع</sup> (9). <sup>التي صرنا لها دوز</sup>

- (1) Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, I. 458  
(2) Ibid, fol. 8b.  
(3) Ibid, fol. 10.  
(4) Ibid, fol. 10b.  
(5) Ibid, fol. 20.  
(6) Ibid, fol. 22  
(7) Ibid, fol. 25  
(8) Ibid, fol. 27b.  
(9) Ibid, fol. 21 seq.



The fourteenth treatise, Ad-Du'ā' (prayer) is on the same basis as the preceding treatise. The propagandist explains the terms pronounced by the believers in Al-Hākim's religion, and by omitting these explanations which are too long to quote, the prayers are as follows:

سجده يا صبيح الازهار يا خدع العالميه يا صديق العالميه يا سجانك يا شه  
تغترز بالكرامه والبرهه يا سجانك يا منة لظاهره كونه كنهه شئ اوله وخره  
دعوه يا سجانك يا منة لعلالي على المسامحه يا سجانك يا منة لا تتركه عنه ولا له عنه  
شهده راقبه وايقنت بانك الله المبيع العزيز يا الواحد الاحد يا ذا الجلال  
لا يبارى لك يا ذا الجلال لا يضر لك يا ذا الجلال لا يضر عليك يا ذا الجلال لا يضر  
عليك يا ذا الجلال يا مولانا سيدنا بقينم جلال قدرتك وذل سلطانك يا  
الله يا مولانا بادل شئ ظهره توحيه وتنزيهه ونف التسيبه عنه  
انه تمه على محال معرفته وصمد طاعته يا ذا الجلال الامراضات يا ذا الجلال  
علم امره يا ذا الجلال البصير يا ذا الجلال عبادته شانه المجد  
والجلوى يا ذا الجلال الاعمى يا ذا الجلال يعرف كونهه عنه تسيبه  
وتقديسه يا ذا الجلال الامور يا ذا الجلال ذات الاعين يا ذا الجلال  
يعرف بالوهنيه يا ذا الجلال كل عدو له يا ذا الجلال لا يضر له يا ذا الجلال  
لا يضره يا ذا الجلال غنى واخفى رزقي يا ذا الجلال معرفته التي منتهى بل على  
مخلقه ونفسه يا ذا الجلال الامور يا ذا الجلال الامور

"Praise be to thee, the causer of things, the originator of the universe, and the chosen of the world. Praise be to thee, who art extolled with pride and might. Praise be to thee who art so magnificent that nothing can be equal to thee; the description of any person (however high it may be) will never apply to thee. Praise be to thee, who art exalted above evil. Praise be to thee, with whom no quality can be connected nor hast thou any qualities. I bear witness and believe and have certainty that thou art



God, the originator, the exalted, the one, that thou art the causer, not caused by another, the creator, with none to oppose thee, the almighty upon whom none can exert might and the judge, who is not himself judged. I pray thee, our lord and master, by the splendour of thy might and the light of thy power, I pray thee by the first thing that came out of thy unity, thy infallibility, and the disavowal of similarity to thee - to grant me thy true knowledge, praiseworthy obedience to thee, the attainment of success in pleasing thee, firmness in thy cause, avoidance of thy interdicts, and the patient endurance of whatever hardships and afflictions I may meet with in the worship of thee. Thou, the most merciful of the merciful, I swear by thy (sacred) right over him who turns himself away from praising and glorifying thee (and turns to) some being other than thee. I will not turn away myself to any other than thee. I repent before thee; I avow thy divinity; I repudiate thy enemies. Thou hast no partner and nobody can resist thy command. Turn thy face from my sin, forgive my offences, and make thy knowledge which thou hast granted me, everlasting in my soul. There is no God but thou, and there is no other worshipped except thou".<sup>(1)</sup>

Such were the prayers said by the dā'I in the royal palace of the Fātimids and pronounced by the unitarians who believed in the unity of Al-Ḥākim. Nevertheless, there were many people who denied these qualities as the author of this treatise has pointed out. Yet he maintains that Al-Ḥākim appeared in bodily form, assumed a human name, and performed all actions like ours, and then became freed from all human qualities. Finally he called upon the people to acknowledge Al-Ḥākim's existence as God and his infallibility,

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(1) Ibid, fol. 27 b..... 31 b.



since he has become the ultimate proof.

يعني أنهم أنكروا أنه قدرة الصورة عند الرسبات المحصنة باليعني وجوده  
في صورة مرسية ظاهرة تكشونه عين صورنا ، رستى با سائنا ،  
وظهر جميع أفعالنا ما تم تجرد عنه صفات البشر ، ورعا الخلق المأرفة  
ووجوده وتنزيها ما فطر أبنائنا مفضلاً أي خالصاً .

(1)

(1) Ibid, fol. 31 b.



## CHAPTER IV.

### (B) Literary Propaganda:

#### Encouragement of Poets, Learned Men and Writers by Awards and Posts:

##### (1) Scribes and Learned Men:

The Fātimid khalīfahs also attached importance to the part played by the poets, scribes, and other men of letters in the promulgation of the Shi'ite propaganda and the interpretation of the power and splendour of their khilāfah. A large number of poets and learned men were officials attached to the Secretariat or to Dārū-l-Ilm, and the khalīfahs conferred on them robes of honour and bestowed on them ample donations.

In dealing with the various offices of state under the Fātimids, Qalqashandī gives an estimate of the monthly pay of high officials, from which we understand that the men of letters, apart from the ample donations and customary dues, were well paid. The Kātibu-l-Inshā' (Director of Correspondence Department) received a monthly salary of 150 dinārs, and each of the other scribes, who worked under him, received 30 dinārs. Next to Kātibu-l-Inshā' <sup>(1)</sup> in rank was the bearer of the Lesser Pen (Al-Qalamu-d-Daqīq), with which he signed documents of complaints; it was his duty to remain in the khalīfah's presence in his leisure time and act as his private tutor; he taught him what he ought to know about the Holy Qur'ān, biographies of the Prophets and of great men, ethics, and also hand-writing, etc. He

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<sup>(1)</sup> Qalqashandī adds that this official was also called Kātibu-d-Dast-ish-Sharīf, whose duty it was to receive all correspondence and submit it to the khalīfah for consideration and approval and act as his Counsellor (III, 490). Ibn Muyassar (p.13) adds that the Kātibu-l-Inshā' also bore the title of 'Kātibu-s-Sirr' which was first introduced in Egypt in A.H. 454 (A.D.1159) under Al-Mustansir, Abu-l-Faraj Muhammad b. Ja'far Al-Maghribī, an ex-Wazīr, being the first official to bear this title.



received a monthly salary of 1,00 dinārs and was given an ornamented inkstand for use in the khalifah's presence. After each sitting, he received an envelope containing ten dinārs, and a parcel of aloes-wood mixed with musk, weighing three mithqāls, with which he had to be censured before he was admitted into the khalifah's presence again. During the later part of the Fātimid khilāfah, in which the wasir was entitled to preside in the "Court of Grievances" in place of the khalifah, the bearer of the Lesser Pen acted as his private secretary, and was authorised to put his seal to the documents of complaints under that of the wasir, and even to examine these documents before the Court was held.<sup>(1)</sup>

Next to the bearer of Al-Qalamu-d-Daqq, was the bearer of Al-Qalamu-l-Jalīl (the Greater Pen)<sup>(2)</sup> whose duty it was to receive the documents of complaints from the Bearer of the Lesser Pen and put them in the legal form before they were submitted for approval by the khalifah<sup>(3)</sup>.

On the whole, the scribes were chosen from among persons reputed for their wide literary knowledge and outstanding capacity in the art of composition, and formed part of the high officials of state entitled for customary dues and gratuities.

(2) Poets:

(A) Poets during the early part of the Fātimid Khilāfah, (A.H.362-466; A.D. 972-1073).

(1) Poets in the Time of Al-Mu'izz:

The elaborate grants, robes of honour, customary dues, and prizes, which were conferred on a large scale upon men

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(1) Qalqashandī, III.491.

(2) This term, although it suggests that this official was higher-in rank than the bearer of the Lesser Pen, yet the post was inferior, and was called the Minor Service (Al-Khidmatu-ṣ-Ṣuḡhrā).

(3) Ibid, III. 491-492.



of letters, prompted them to compose *qasīdahs* in praise of the Fātimids. The desire for acquiring such substantial rewards inspired even Sunnite poets to do the same, and a good number of them were attached to the Fātimid court. But, in their praise, the Sunnite poets were moderate, while the Shi'ite poets, such as Ibn Hānī, extolled the glory of this family in extravagant language, and even carried their eulogies to the verge of impiety. A short biography of Ibn Hānī's career may be given here,<sup>(1)</sup> for it shows the importance that the Fātimids attached to the part of their propaganda conducted by poets. It was the hope of Al-Mu'izz that Ibn Hānī would rival or even surpass the poets of the 'Abbāsids. This is supported by the statement that "when Al-Mu'izz arrived in Egypt and heard of Ibn Hānī's death, he expressed great grief at his loss and said, 'We hoped to have placed this man in competition with the poets of the East, but that pleasure has been refused'<sup>(2)</sup> us". No doubt, Al-Mu'izz had good reason for his remark, for Ibn Hānī's *Dīwān*, 246 pages in number, is chiefly composed in

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, II, 5.

(2) Abū-l-Qāsim, surnamed also Abu-l-Ḥasan, Muḥammad b. Hānī, a member of the tribe of Azd, was born at Seville in Spain, where he passed his early youth. His father, Hānī, had formerly been a native of a village in the territory of Al-Mahdiyyah, a city in N. Africa, and displayed considerable talents as a poet and a philosopher, and, Muḥammad was born to him after he crossed over into Spain. There Muḥammad gained the favour of the prince who governed Seville, plunged into dissipation and incurred the suspicion of holding the doctrines of the philosophers. This report at last appeared to be so justified that it drew on him the hatred of the people; and they even murmured against his patron, as holding 'the same impious opinions'. The prince recommended him to retire from the city and remain absent till his conduct was forgotten. Ibn Hānī left the place, being then about 27 years of age (A.H. 347 or 353; A.D. 958 or 964), crossed over to the Maghrib, where he met and eulogised the Qā'id, Jawhar. He then went to visit Ja'far and Yahyā, the sons of 'Alī b. Aḥmad b. Ḥamdān Al-Andalusī, prince of Al-Maṣīlah and amir of the province of the Zēb in N. Africa, and a generous patron of men of learning; in honour of Ja'far, Ibn Hānī composed a number of admirable poems. Both brothers treated him with ~~the~~ honour and



praise of Al-Mu'izz and his family. There is no historical evidence to show that Ibn Hānī had accepted the doctrines of the Shi'ite faith in his early years. At least, he must have been in favour of such doctrines, for he revealed his sympathies as soon as he arrived in the Maghrib. He seems to have been a zealous Shi'ite, for he even attributes Shi'ism to his sword of which he speaks in these two verses as being as devout a Shi'ite as himself:

1. I have a sword; it is a Shi'ite like its bearer; and almost precedes my attacks upon the hero.

2. If Al-Mu'izz, the exalter of religion, charges it (with the task of beating the foe), it will no longer fear the end of life.<sup>(1)</sup>

It was also, perhaps, due to the fact that Ibn Hānī was greatly impressed by the favour and generosity of Al-Mu'izz that he became a Shi'ite; this is shown from the following lines of one of his qasīdahs, in praise of Al-Mu'izz, in which he shows how he sought to join Al-Mu'izz for his rewards and grants:

27. I began to seek some noble (generous) person, but all people were like a jet-black mountain.

28. Yet, at last, I was impelled towards Al-Mu'izz, the Khalifah; and, on my arrival, I was convinced that khalifahs are the aim (of my desire).

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kindness, but his reputation having reached Al-Mu'izz, he sent for him, and received him on his arrival with the highest marks of favour. Al-Mu'izz having then set out for Egypt, Ibn Hānī accompanied him for some distance and then returned to the Maghrib with the intention of taking his family and joining his master. Having set out with them, he arrived at Barqa, where he was hospitably received by one of the inhabitants, and passed some days with him in friendly intercourse. Soon after this, he lost his life, "in a drunken squabble", as Ibn Khallikān states; in another account, the same author states that the cause of his death could not be ascertained. This incident occurred on Wednesday morning, 23rd Rajab, 362 (30th April, A.H. 973). He had then attained his thirty-sixth year; some say his forty-second. (Ibn Khallikān, II., 5).

(1) Diwān, p. 182.



29. Compared to his generosity, the sea is mere spittle, and the world thereon is like the foam ~~on~~<sup>(1)</sup> on the sea.

In another high-sounding long poem, said to have been the first eulogy recited in Qayrawān in praise of Al-Mu'izz Ibn Hānī says:-

21. Death was the water in which its steel (the sword of Al-Mu'izz) was tempered, and its blade was not forged by (human) workmen.

22. Before it descends, the man who is struck encounters the might of Al-Mu'izz or his cherished name.

23. Here is Ma'add and all created beings. Here is Al-Mu'izz, crowned, and religion.

24. This is the purpose of the first creation by God and its hidden secret.

38. And neighing (steeds), for whom, on the day of their inroad, the hills are not hills, nor is the rugged ground rugged.

42. They are recognised the instant they pass all rivals, but not by the fact that the eye could not follow them on their career on the day of trial.

43. The lightning knows with marvellous knowledge that they are borne along on its wings, and (that their speed is equal to) that of thought.

44. The copious rains may serve (O prince!) as an emblem of thy liberality; thy right hand seems to have touched the constellations.

45. Riches are only that which you bring to us, thy liberality seems as if it were a pledge for eternity.

51. Permit it (the sea) to drown the Umayyads, thus announcing that whatever thing is under God's control, is also subject to thine.

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(1) Id., p. 7.



76. Thou art the light, all other light is but darkness; thou art the above (above all other human beings); any other rank compared with thine is low.

83. Mayest thou provide thy servants with the favour of thy intercession, and bring them near to thee, for thou art powerful (in doing so):<sup>(1)</sup>

In this fashion Ibn Hānī composed eulogies of Al-Mu'izz commemorating his noble deeds, and extolling the Shi'ite propaganda, even going so far as to claim for his master certain attributes of the Prophet and of God. Ibn Hānī gave a lead to the succeeding poets. In another long eulogy, Ibn Hānī addresses Al-Mu'izz in this tone:

31. He (Al-Mu'izz) is the object for which the world was created - the one for whom it (the world) was made. Verily, things are created for some reason.

68. And thine are the ships, sailing along<sup>(2)</sup> moving by thy command, and the winds are subservient (to thee).<sup>(3)</sup>

86. Eyes have become submissive to thee, the decrees of fate have yielded to thy power, and changes of the weather are subservient to thee.

99. Question not fate, for it lies in thy hands and goes wherever thou dost desire.<sup>(4)</sup>

Further, in another qaṣīdah, Ibn Hānī continues to praise Al-Mu'izz, and puts him on the same level as Jesus and Muḥammad, and even claims for him certain attributes of the deity:

19. We call him revengeful, powerful, and almighty, pardoning sin, and full of forgiveness.

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(1) Id., pages 211-16. This long poem is preceded by the following introduction: "It is said that, as a reward for this qaṣīdah of Ibn Hānī, Al-Mu'izz ordered him the present of a carpet (dast) valued at 8,000 dīnārs, and the poet said, 'Commander of the faithful! I have no place large enough to hold it, if it be spread out'. On this, Al-Mu'izz ordered a palace to be built for him at the cost of 8,000 dīnārs, with furniture to match the palace and the carpet."

(2) Qur'ān, LV. 24.

(3) Id., XXXVII. 36.

(4) Dīwān, pages 7-11.



58. I swear that, had you not been called a khalifah, you would have been called a Messiah (though you come) after the Messiah. (1)

59. The high heavens have declared thy glory, and the Qur'ān has been revealed as an eulogy for thee. (2)

Again, in another poem, Ibn Hānī describes Al-Mu'izz as Muhammad, and his supporters as Anṣārs, and even puts him on the same level as God:

1. What thou dost desire, not what fate desires, therefore, rule over us, for thou art the one and the supreme.

2. Thou art like the Prophet Muhammad, and thy supporters are like the Anṣār.

6. This is he whose intercession will avail in days to come; truly, fire will be extinguished on seeing him. (3)

And, in a high-sounding qasidah, Ibn Hānī commemorates the victory of the troops of the Maghrib over the Byzantines in Syria:

103. Who takes for his guide a khalifah other than Al-Mu'izz? Guidance apart from him is but a leading astray (4).

And, on a certain Bairam, Ibn Hānī addressed the Khalifah as follows:-

19. This is the son of the inspiration of God, whom angels take as a guide, morning and evening. (5)

30. His processions have terrified the mountains, and their plateaus have uttered words of praise (6).

108. Of the hidden secrets of God, you know what Michael himself, in the heavenly kingdom, is not given. (7)

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(1) Id. p. 34.

(2) Id. p. 36.

(3) Id. p. 96.

(4) Id. p.153.

(5) Id. p.154.

(6) Id. p.155.

(7) Id. p.159.



112. If He had given men what thou hast been given,  
He would not have created similtude and analogy. (1)

The highest point in Ibn Hānī's glorification of Al-Mu'izz is reached when he attributes to him miraculous powers.

14. I hereby bear witness that he (Al-Mu'izz) has the power to work miracles, even as I bear witness that God is One and Eternal. (2)

It is most probable that Ibn Hānī's views were due to the doctrines of the Greek philosophers and that the liberality of the Fātimid Khalifah, Al-Mu'izz, in whose favour this poet stood high, inspired his desire to extol the noble deeds of the Fātimids and take part in their propaganda. This is shewn in these lines of the qaṣidah which Ibn Hānī composed and sent to Al-Mu'izz in Egypt. This qaṣidah may be the last of the qaṣidahs in which Ibn Hānī belauded Al-Mu'izz:

31. He (Al-Mu'izz) is the spirit of guidance in a body of light provided by an incorporeal ray from the Highest One.

36. I swear that if people do not model their description of him on that of God they are devoid of understanding and imagination. (3)

(11) Poets in the Time of Al-'Azīz and Al-Hakīm  
(A.H. 365-411; A.D. 975-1021):

It has been shewn that the grants and gratuities which the wazīr, Ibn Killis and his master, Al-Mu'izz, bestowed upon the poets, prompted the composition of remarkable qaṣidahs by a good number of them. A few examples may be given here:

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(1) Id., p. 160.

(2) Id., p. 164.

(3) Id., p. 188.



Abū 'Abd-illāh b. Muḥammad b. Abī-l-Jarj; a contemporary poet in the time of Al-'Azīz, composed on a certain occasion when the waṣīr, Ibn Killīs, was suffering from pain in his hand, a poem in which he expressed his sorrow for the Waṣīr's illness and described how he had benefited considerably by his ample donations. A few lines of this poem may be quoted:

1. The hand of the Waṣīr (Ibn Killīs) is the world: if it aches, then everything will suffer from the same pain.

4. And the souls of men are united in suffering, as though they were afflicted with illness on his account.

6. Were it not for Al-'Azīz (the Khalīfah) and the counsels of the Waṣīr, we should have sustained adversities which could overwhelm whole nations.

10. May you ever enjoy the best of health, my lord! (Ibn Killīs'), for you have delivered me from extreme poverty by the grants you have bestowed upon me! (1)

Again, as Ibn Khallikān states, on the morning following the day of the death of Ibn Killīs, his tomb was visited by the poets, one hundred of whom, it is said, recited elegies over it, and for their poems, they received ample donations. (2)

Nor was such munificence confined to the khalīfahs and their waṣīrs only. It was also manifest among other men of high status as, for instance, the Qā'id, Faḍl b. Ṣāliḥ, one of the amīrs, whose duty it was to accompany the Khalīfah, Al-'Azīz, when he rode out in state. It was in this Amīr's praise that Abū-l-Qāsim 'Abdu-l-Ghaḥfār, the later court-poet of Al-Hākīm, composed a qaṣīdah from which the following lines may be quoted:

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(1) Maqrīzī (Khitāṭ, II, 7).

(2) Ibn Khallikān, II, 443.



1. Al-Faḍl is a brilliant star on the foreheads of our eulogies.

3. His hand is the centre of beneficence for travellers departing in the morning and arriving at eventide.

4. All things prosper under the direction of the son of Ṣalīḥ.<sup>(1)</sup>

The munificence of the wazīrs and other men of high status was only on a smaller scale than that of the khalifāhs themselves, especially during the early period of the Fātimid rule, when the prestige of the khalifāhs was still high. This statement may be illustrated by giving a few lines of a qaṣīdah composed by the great poet, Abū Ḥāmid Al-Anṭākī,<sup>(2)</sup> in praise of Al-Mu'izz and his wazīr, Ibn Killis. These lines signify that the wazīr's authority depended entirely on the support of his master.

1. He (Ibn Killis) has not left on earth an enemy to Al-'Azīz, whose ardour he hath not quelled.

5. He daily wages war against the vicissitudes of Fortune and the attacks of adversity by bestowing abundant gifts.

6. His hand would be covered with dishonour did avarice force it to withdraw; it is a hand accustomed to renew the charge in the combat of liberality.

7. By its munificence the number of the foes of Al-'Azīz has been diminished, and of friends, increased.

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(1) Tha'ġlibī, I. 347.

(2) Abū Ḥāmid Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Al-Anṭākī, a native of Anṭākyah (Antioch), a city near Aleppo, was a poet of repute, of whom Ath-Tha'ġlibī has made mention in his 'Yaṭīmah' (I. 238) and speaks of him in these terms: "He was the pearl of his age, the union of excellencies:.... he was a skilful eulogist, an able poet; he was for Syria what Ibn Ḥajjāj (Al-Ḥusayn) was for 'Irāq', and, as Ibn Khallikān states, he was a long time resident in Egypt, and much of his poetry consists in panegyrics on the princes and great men of that country. He composed poems in praise of the Fātimid Khalifāhs, Al-Mu'izz, Al-'Azīz, and Al-Hākim, and celebrated also the praises of Jawhar, Ibn Killis, and other men of high rank. Musabbiḥī makes mention of this poet in his 'History of Egypt', and assigns the year A.H. 399 (A.D. 1008-9) as that of his death. (Ibn Khallikān, I. 48-49).



8. Such is the hand of the nobleman which day and night worketh good (to friends) and evil (to foes)<sup>(1)</sup>.

The encouragement of the poets continued until the end of the Fāṭimid rule. Maqrīzī, in an interesting account of the watch-tower which overlooked the Birkatu-l-Mabash, which was founded by Al-Āmir, says, "In this watch-tower were arches on which were painted pictures of the poets of the time, with their names and native lands inscribed at the top of each arch. On one side of each arch was a sheet of cloth on which was inscribed an eulogy of his own composition; on the other, a shelf, worked in gold. When the khalīfah visited this tower, he read the poems and ordered packets of fifty dīnārs each to be placed on each shelf. The poets were then admitted in and took their packets."<sup>(2)</sup>

(111) Poets in the Time of Az-Zāhir (A.H.411-427; A.D. 1021-1035):

Such was the encouragement of poets under the Fāṭimids, so that many a poet was persuaded to emigrate from his native land and settle in Egypt, where he might hope to enjoy the munificence of the Fāṭimid court. For the rival court in Baghdad did not offer encouragement to poets, and the khalīfahs themselves were powerless and helpless. But, on the other hand, the Fāṭimid court was ready and willing to receive any distinguished poet, whether Sunnīte or Shī'ite.

'Abdu-l-Wahhāb b. Naṣr, the Mālikīte, a native of Baghdad, and a distinguished doctor of the canon law of the Maliki School, an elegant scholar, and a poet, whom Abū Bakr Al-Baghdādī describes in his 'History of Baghdad' as a trustworthy traditionist and an abler jurisconsult than he had ever met with among the Maliki doctors,<sup>(3)</sup> is a

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(1) Tha'ālibī, I. 239.

(2) Maqrīzī, Khitāṭ, I. 486-87

(3) Ibn Khallikān, I. 382.



remarkable figure among the poets who abandoned Baghdad in favour of Cairo.

Ibn Naṣr was an ex-Qāḍī of Badarḥyā and Bākusīya, two towns near near An-Nahrawān,<sup>(1)</sup> and, according to Yāqūt on the authority of Ibn Bassām, he also held the office of qāḍī of the city of Isīrd, in Mesopotamia near the Tigris at a distance of one and a half days' journey to the south of Mayyāfāriqīn.<sup>(2)</sup> But, towards the latter period of his life, he travelled to Egypt after having been rejected by Baghdad. As Yāqūt states, on the day of his departure, the great men and other men of letters formed a large company to escort him out of the city. This great doctor and poet expressed his feelings by saying that he had to leave Baghdad, 'not through hatred, but simply because even the means of subsistence were refused him', so much so that he concluded his address in the following words: "Had I found among you a roll of bread every morning and every evening, I should not have turned from your town, as I would then have obtained all I wish for."<sup>(3)</sup>

Ibn Naṣr expressed his sorrow at leaving Baghdad in one of his poems in which he bade farewell to his native town and alluded to the circumstance:

1. Of all the abodes on earth, let Baghdad receive my salutation; it is entitled to repeated salutations (of farewell) from me.

2. By Lord, I left it, not through hatred, and yet I knew (what perversity filled) the quarters on both sides of the river.

3. But large as it was, I could find no ease within it,

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(1) Marāṣid I., 116.

(2) Yāqūt, Buldān, see Baghdad.

(3) Ibid, see Baghdad.



and even the means of subsistence were refused me.

4. That city is like a friend, whose company is anxiously desired, but whose character removes him (from our affection) and counteracts his good qualities.<sup>(1)</sup>

In another poem, 'Abdu-l-Wahhāb refers to his life in Baghdad as follows:

1. Baghdad is a delightful residence for those who have money, but for the poor, it is an abode of misery and suffering.

2. I walked all day through its streets, bewildered and desolate; I was (treated with neglect) like a Qur'ān in the house of an atheist.<sup>(2)</sup>

Such were the sufferings of a great doctor of canon law, an ex-Qāḍī, and a reputed poet, treated with neglect, so that he had to lead his way in the streets of the seat of the 'Abbāsīd Empire, so 'desolate and bewildered' that he finally chose to settle in Cairo, the seat of the Pāṭimīd Shi'ite Khilāfah.

He set out for Egypt, and as he passed through Ma'arratu-n-Nuṣayr<sup>(3)</sup>, the native town of the great poet, Abū-l-'Alā' Al-Ma'arrī, who received him with hospitality, and afterwards alluded to the circumstance in one of his poems:

9. Ibn Naṣr, the Mālikite, visited our country on his journey, and we praised the misfortunes which force a man to abandon his native place and to travel.

10. When he explains a point of law, his reasonings give new life to Mālik, and when he utters verses, the Wandering King<sup>(4)</sup> seems to revive in his person.<sup>(5)</sup>

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(1) Ibn Khallikān, I. 383.

(2) Yāqūt, Buldān, see Baghdad.

(3) A town in the province of Emessa (Hims.) situated between Aleppo and Ḥamāh (Id., see Ma'arrah).

(4) The 'Wandering King' (Al-Maliku-d-Dillīl) was a surname given to Imrī'ul-Q'ays whom Muḥammad considered to be the greatest of all poets.

Al-Ma'arrī (Abu-l-Alā):

(5) Dīwān 'Saḡṡu-s-Zind', p.134.



On arriving in Egypt, he was received with hospitality and favour, and, as Ibn Khallikān expresses it, 'he bore the standard of superiority and filled it far and wide with his renown, and drew after him its chiefs and its princes; there, the signal favours of fortune reached him, and gifts the most desirable poured like a torrent into his hands.' The same author goes on to state that this took place during the Khilāfah of Aḡ-Zāhir, in A.H. 422 (A.D. 1030) in which year 'Abdu-l-Fahhāb died, for he had scarcely arrived there, when he longed to eat a particular dish, and, having partaken thereof, he died. When his last moment was come, he exclaimed, "There is no god but God! When we began to live, we died." (1)

(B) Poets During the Later Part of the Fātimid Khilāfah (A.H. 466-567; A.D. 1073-1171):

An account will now be given of the part played by the poets during the later part of the Fātimid Khilāfah. The material is mainly supplied by 'Imādu-d-Dīn Al-Iṣfahānī, (2) a contemporary writer of this period.

(2) Abū 'Abd-ullāh Maḥammad b. Abī-r-Rajā'... b. Hibat-illāh Al-Iṣfahānī, surnamed 'Imādu-d-Dīn was born in Ispāhān in A.H. 519 (A.D. 1125). He was a Shāfi'ite doctor and a graduate of the Nizamiyyah College in Baghdad, and distinguished himself in controversy and literature. He then served under the Wazīr, 'Awnu-d-Dīn b. Hubayrah, and stood high in his favour. However, on the death of this Wazīr, 'Imādu-d-Dīn set out for Damascus which he reached in A.H. 562 (A.D. 1166), and was entrusted with the direction of the Correspondence Department. In A.H. 567 (A.D. 1171), 'Imādu-d-Dīn became a Professor in the College at Damascus. On the death of Nūru-d-Dīn, 'Imādu-d-Dīn went to Mosul where he was taken ill and remained there till A.H. 570 (A.D. 1174), when he returned to Damascus, and thence went to Aleppo and served under Saladin in whose favour he stood high. On the death of Saladin, 'Imādu-d-Dīn returned again to Damascus and devoted himself to literature until he died in A.H. 597 (A.D. 1200). - Ibn Khallikān (II. 97-100).

(1) Ibn Khallikān, I, 283.



The period, with which 'Imādu-d-Dīn deals in his work, may be divided into two parts: the first deals with poets who lived during the period A.H. 486-549 (A.D. 1093-1154), that is to say, under the Khilāfahs of Al-Musta'li (A.H. 495-524; A.D. 1101-1131), Al-Ḥāfiz (A.H. 524-544; A.D. 1131-1149), and Aḡ-Z̤afīr (A.H. 543-549; A.D. 1149-1154); the second with the poets under the last two Fāṭimid Khalifahs, Al-Fā'iz (A.H. 549-555; A.D. 1154-1160) and Al-'Adid (A.H. 555-567; A.D. 1160-1171).

It has already been shown that many a poet was induced to emigrate from his native land and settle in Egypt by the hope of enjoying the patronage of the Fāṭimid Khalifahs and their Wasīrs, as well as of other men of high status; we have given as an example an account of the great poet, 'Abdu-l-Wahhāb b. Naṣr, the Malikite doctor. Isfahānī has furnished us with valuable accounts of other poets who left their native lands in favour of Egypt.

(1) Poets in the Period A.H. 486-549; A.D. 1093-1154):

Abu-l-Fityān Mufaḍḍal b. Ḥasan b. Khaḍr, a native of Ascalon, emigrated from his native land and settled in Egypt where he benefited considerably by grants from Al-Afḍal, son of Amīru-l-Juyūsh, in whose praise Ibn Khaḍr composed a qaṣidah from which the following lines may be quoted:

1. I say, while the star has marked on his forehead a line (of light) that I have seen, while the light of the morning was smiling.

3. Is he distributing the lustre of his face in his goblet, or has the water (the wine itself) turned into blood in his face?

4. The morning was made into light from his appearance and evenings have borrowed darkness from his hair.



1. اقول والنجم مرقوم لبقته x طراظكم رؤسوا الصبح يستسم
3. اما رعدية افضى زرباقتة x بديرا ام ماؤها ز وفتية دم
4. صبح الصباغ ضياء آسديكته x فاستباحت حلاظا منقوشا

(1)

Further, Al-Afdal's munificence also attracted Abu-l-Hasan 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm, surnamed Ibnu-l-'Alānī, a native of Al-Ma'arrāh, the native city of the great poet Abu-l-'Alā'. Ibnu-l-'Alānī came to Egypt where he enjoyed the liberality of the Wazīr, Al-Afdal. A few lines of a qasīdah composed by this poet in praise of this Wazīr may be quoted:

3. (His home is) the Mecca of Egypt, and the pilgrims are those people who come to his home; his right hand is the angle (in which the Black Stone of the Ka'bah is found) of the Sacred House, and the Nile is (the Sacred Well of) Zamzam.

4. He, who is grateful for what you bestow upon him, admits his inadequacy (in praising you), although there is in every member of his body a mouth (to praise you).

3. ضمة مصر دانيج وصوره x دينا، ركة البيت والليل ز منم
4. وشار ماؤها منقوشة x ولوانه منقوشة

(2)

Again, Abu-l-Hasan 'Alī b. Ja'far b. Al-Buwayn, also a native of Al-Ma'arrāh, is another example of a poet who came to Egypt in expectation of the munificence of the Fātimid Khalīfahs and their Wazīrs. 'Imādu-d-Dīn states on the

(1) 'Imādu-d-Dīn Al-Ispihānī, Bib. Nat. Ms. 3328, fol. 181 b.

(2) Ibid, fol. 133 b.



authority of Usāmah b. Munqidh that Ibnu-l-Buwayn stood high in Al-Afdal's favour "who poured down upon him the clouds of his munificence and lavished his generosity upon him, and invested him with the title of 'The Guardian of the State', and distinguished him by his favour."

فأنه أفاض عليه من كآب  
إحسانه وأدر عليه من علوية انعامه ، ولقبته باسم الملك واستخلصه

The following lines of a poem, composed by this poet in praise of Al-Afdal, may be quoted:

1. You, in respect of whom hearing and sight have vied with one another, even as the sun and the moon have become jealous of one another.

2. He who has ruled over the souls which submitted to his arbitration: so that there should be no other human-being (other than him) to judge over them.

1. يا من تناظر فيه السمع والبصر x كلا تقاريفه الشمس والقمر

2. ومنه تحكم في الدواعي فاحتكته x انه لا يحكم في بيت بشر

(1)

Moreover, 'Imādu-d-Dīn has supplied us with a valuable account of Abu-l-Hasan 'Alī b. Muḥammad Al-Akhfash, a Sharīf Maghribīte poet, who distinguished himself in his praise of the Khalīfahs, Al-Āmir and Al-Hāfiz, and celebrated the glory of the Fātimids in extravagant terms. The following line of one of his eulogies in praise of the Khalīfah, Al-Āmir, may be quoted:

(Al-Āmir) is attached to the climax of 'Alid<sup>(2)</sup> light as much as he is attached to the climax of divine light.

الذروة النورية العلوية x الذروة النورية الدواعية (3)

(1) Ibid, Ms. 3329, fol. 143.

(2) The word given in the Ms. is written thus: <sup>الفلاني</sup> It seems that it was incorrectly copied for <sup>والعكرني</sup> the 'Alid.

(3) Ibid, Fol. 140.



In another eulogium in praise of the Khalifah, Al-Hāfiz, Al-Akhfash says:

2. Although in our eyes he is a human being, yet, when perceived by the mind, he is light and guidance.

3. He is too great to be seen by our eyes and too exalted to be seen as a (human) body.

بشره الصمد الدائم x به ضربه العقل نور دهری  
جلاله تبارك ههنا x وتعالى انه زاه جدا (1)

On the other hand, Egyptian poets, who happened to leave Egypt, received no consideration in the capital of the 'Abbāsids. The poet, Ja'far b. Abi Zabīd, is a good example of this. In one of his *qaṣīdahs* after leaving Egypt for Baghdad, he expresses his sorrow as follows:

1. The object of our coming to Baghdad was not longing for its inhabitants, nor have our eyes been blinded (to the fact that nothing is to be gained here) since we have left (Egypt).

2. Nor have we chosen a city in preference to Miṣr, but it was Destiny that drove us hither (to Baghdad)

وما قصرتنا بغداد شرًا لعلنا x ولا رغبت مذقنا اجسادنا عنا  
ولا اننا افترنا ما لم يبت x سواها وكله المقادير ساقنا (2)

Indeed, the munificence of the Fāṭimid Khalifahs, their Wazīrs, and other men of high status was manifest. That the liberality of the Fāṭimids was on a generous scale is shown in these two lines of Abu-l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Mufarraǵ, one of the Fāṭimid poets in the time of the Khalifah, Al-Hāfiz, who ordered that poets should compose their *qaṣīdahs* in a brief form, so this poet composed a poem in which he says:

1. You (the Khalifah) have ordered that eulogies

(1) Ibid, fol.142.

(2) Ibid, Ms.3328, fol.110.



should be moulded in a brief form, why have you not (also) ordered that the liberality of your hands should be abridged?

2. By God! our horses must (be left to) gallop, so that the traces (of their galloping) of your praise may show itself (more) clearly.

1. أَمَرْنَا أَنْ نَضَوِّغَ الْمَدْعَ مَخْصَرًا × لَمْ لَا أَمْرَةٍ نَذِي كَفَيْكَ مَخْصَرًا

2. وَاللهِ لَا يَدْبُرُهُ تَجْرِي سَوَاقِنَا × حَتَّى يَبِيدَ لَنَا مَدْعَا لَدُنَّ

(1)

Abū 'Alī Ḥasan b. Zubayd, a scribe and a poet, whom 'Imādu-d-Dīn, on the authority of Al-Qāḍī Al-Fāḍil, describes in these terms: 'a man of letters, such as time has never presented before', is another example of Fāṭimid poets who played a prominent part in the spread of the Fāṭimid propaganda. On the occasion of achieving a victory over the Crusaders, Ibn Zubayd congratulates the Khalifah, Al-Ḥāfiz in these words in prose: "Praise be to God Who has given priority to the kingdom of the Commander of the Faithful over all the various kingdoms..... and has made his days days of brightness and happiness and a star full of eminent excellent deeds, and favoured with triumph and victory. May God make victory flutter over his banners and happiness precede his soldiers.....! and we pray God to bring the (whole) world within his power and the moving stars among his supporters and arms..... etc.

وَلَمْ يَخْنِ الْخَافِظُ بِالْظَفَرِ: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي فَضَّلَ دَوْلَةَ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى سَائِرِ الدُّوَلِ .....  
وَجَعَلَ أَيَّامَهُ وَاضِحَةً الْجُيُودِ وَالْفَرْدَ مُخْصُوصَةً بِالْفَتْحِ وَالْظَفَرَ مَخْنِفَةً  
النَّصْرَ عَلَى بَنِيهِ وَتَسِيرَ الْعَادَةِ أَمَامَ جُنُودِهِ ..... وَشَالَ إِلَهَ الْإِيمَانِ  
الدَّرَمَ قَبْضَةً يَدِهِ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ الْجَارِيَةَ مِمَّا حُفَّتْهُ وَعُدَّتُهُ ..... (2)

Nor were Ibn Zayd's eulogies restricted to the Fāṭimid

(1) Ibid, fol. 108.

(2) Ibid, Ms. 3328, fol. 110 b.



Khalifah. In one of his qasidahs, in praise of Al-Afdal, he says:

1. The time has invested me with a robe of glory, as a token of honour, for praising Al-Afdal, the nobleman.
2. He meets the eulogies by the giving of donations and puts his words into actions (by fulfilling his promises).

1. *مطلع الزمان على علة مفخر* x *سرفا بجمع الرضا الفضل*
2. *ليقة المدايح بالحنان واها* x *ويصدقه الدقوال بالفضل* (1)

In another eulogy in praise of the same Wazir, Ibn Zubayd says:

18. Were it not for your existence at this time and your munificence which has revived noble actions long after their death,

19. Favour would not have been known in the world, though we had wandered all over it.

18. *لولا وجودك في الزمان وجودك لا* x *تحيي المكارم بعد تبيد وفاتك*
19. *لم يعرف المعوض في الدنيا ولو* x *حفظنا عليه في جميع عمار* (2)

Yet, in spite of his achievements for the Fāṭimid cause, Ibn Zubayd's end was lamentable. Imādu-d-Dīn states on the authority of Al-Qāḍī Al-Fāḍil that a man called Ibn Qādūs composed two lines of verse in which he satirised the Khalifah's son, Al-Ḥasan, put the sheet of paper, on which these two lines were written, with Ibn Zubayd's other papers, and then calumniated him to Al-Ḥasan who ordered Ibn Zubayd to be put to death. (3)

Further, 'Imādu-d-Dīn has furnished us with an account of 'Alī b. 'Abbād (4) a native of Alexandria, and an eminent

(1) Ibid, Ms. 3328, fol. 118 b.

(2) Ibid, fol. 121 b.

(3) Ibid, fol. 110 b.

(4) The word given in the Ms. is Ibn 'Ubadah عباد. However, the same word is mentioned again three times as 'Abbād عباد and 'Ayyād; the third name is obviously incorrect, since it is used only by Copts. The word 'Abbād seems to be the correct word (Ms. 3328, fol. 97 seq.)



poet attached to the Fāṭimid court in the time of the Khalīfah, Al-Hāfiz, in whose favour he stood high, and benefited considerably by his grants and donations. But when the Khalīfah was put into custody by Abū 'Alī, son of the Wazīr, Al-Afdal, Ibn 'Abbād composed a qaṣīdah in which he congratulated the Wazīr. In this qaṣīdah, Ibn 'Abbād says:

The time has smiled, but after it had frowned, and it has demolished (its tent), after spending the night.

If we pray that you may live for ourselves, our prayer will be: may you long live, son of the brave, nobleman!

God has returned his seal to him, so he has regained his power from Ṣakhrībn Iblīs. (1)

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| تَبَسَّمَ الدَّهْرُ لَكَ بَعْدَ تَقَبُّيسٍ   | x | وَقَوَّضَ الدَّهْرُ لَكَ بَعْدَ تَقَبُّيسٍ                 |
| إِذَا دَعَوْنَا بِأَنَّهُ تَبَيَّنَ لَدُنَّا | x | بَعَاوُنَا: فَالْبَاقِيَةُ يَا أَبَا السَّارَةِ الْتَوَسَّ |
| وَقَدَّعَادَ إِلَيْهِ فَا مَمَّ              | x | وَأَسْتَرْجِعُ الْمَلِكَ مِنْ مَرْبِ الْمَلِكِ             |

(2)

The last line, in which Ibn 'Abbād attacks the khalīfah, was the cause of his being put to death soon after the khalīfah had been released from his custody and had regained his authority on the death of the Wazīr

Nor were the eulogies of the poets restricted to the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs and their wazīrs. Other men of high status had their share in such recognition of the munificence which the poets hoped to enjoy from them. Abu-l-Faḍl Ja'far b. Al-Mufaḍḍal, surnamed Al-Muhadhdhab, whose eulogies were composed mainly in praise of the Wazīr, Al-Afdal, may serve as an example.

'Imādu-d-Dīn gives an account of Al-Muhadhdhab's relations with the governor of Alexandria, and states that this

(1) It is obvious that the term Ṣakhrībn Iblīs is used for the Khalīfah; as to the context of this term, we are unfortunately ignorant of the matter.

(2) Ibid, fol. 98.



poet was one day asked to compose a few lines describing a ring which had tightened round the Amīr's finger; this he did, and the Amīr ordered a grant to be given to the poet. The two lines composed by this poet may be quoted:

The learned have fallen short in (their enumeration of) your qualities, though both prose and verse have recognised them.

Though the sea (of generosity) is the palm of his hand (i.e. his hand dispenses generosity with stint), yet the ring tightens round his little finger.

قَصْرَةُ أَوْصَالِكَ الْعَالَمِ      فَاعْتَرَفْنَا لَنَا بِرِّهِ وَالنَّافِعِ  
سَدِّكَ الْبَحْرَ لَامَهُ      يَضِيْعُ عَنْ خَيْرِهِ الْخَاتَمِ      (1)

Soon after receiving the grant, Al-Muhaddhab was asked again to describe a gazelle that lay in the Amīr's lap, and another grant was ordered to be given him. The two lines composed by this poet may be quoted:

I am surprised at the audacity of this gazelle and at what it has dared and purposed (by such boldness).

How wonderful that it should begin to crouch down! for how can it feel safe, since thou art the lion?

عَجِبْتُ لِمَاذَا هَذَا الْفَزَالِ      وَامْرَحَظُهُ لِمَ دَاعَدَ  
وَأَتَغَيَّبَ بِهِ إِذَا بَرَّاهَا شَيْئًا      فَكَيْفَ الظُّهُرُ دَانَتْهُ الرِّسْدُ      (2)

On another occasion the same poet was asked to describe a curtain which hung over the door of the Amīr's residence; his lines were greeted with applause, and he received a third grant. The lines were as follows:

I saw nets on that lofty door of yours, and some apprehension came over me, and I pondered over that which had befallen me, then I said, "It is on the sea that nets are found" (i.e. these nets make me think of his boundless

(1) Ibid, fol. 87 b.

(2) Ibid, fol. 87 b.



generosity).

|                                     |   |                                    |     |
|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----|
| سُبْحًا فَاذْكُرْنِي بِهِ شَكَ      | x | أَيْتُ يَا بَكْرُ ضَا الْمُسَيْفِ  |     |
| طَاهِرُ الْبِرِّ كَوْنُهُ الشُّبْهِ | x | وَفَكَرْتُ فَيَا مَرْيَمُ فَقُلْتُ | (1) |

Such was the liberality of the Fāṭimid Khalifahs, their wazirs, and other men of high status, so that the poets were persuaded to devote themselves to the composition of eulogies in their praise. It is no wonder, therefore, that some of these poets carried their praise to the verge of impiety. 'Imādu-d-Dīn was, as has been stated, a Sunnite who regarded the quoting of poems dealing with such views to be itself an act of impiety. It is for this reason that only a few examples of qaṣīdahs composed by extreme Fāṭimid poets exist in this valuable work.

Ibnu-d-Dayf, a Fāṭimid poet in the time of the Khalīfah, Al-Āmir, was looked upon as a heretic by 'Imādu-d-Dīn who refrained from quoting some of his qaṣīdahs in praise of the Fāṭimids, and he gives the reason why he declined to do so as follows: "Ibnu-d-Dayf was one of the dā'īs attached to the pretenders (meaning the Fāṭimids) and was extreme in his loyalty to them. He lived in the time of Al-Āmir (about A.H. 500; A.D. 1106), in whose praise he composed many poems. I have come across his Dīwān, written in his own handwriting. It was my intention to neglect it because of his extravagant language, for he injured religion, though in writing poetry, he did well.... However, I thought it advisable not to deprive my book of making mention of him, for the believer and the unbeliever, the innocent and the sinner, all sail on the swelling sea..... etc." (2).

(1) Ibid., fol. 87 b.

(2) Ibid., fol. 52 b. seq.



أبو الضيف طم منه دُعَاة الدُعَاة المُقَالِمِ لِمِ فِي الدُّوَلِ دُطْمُهُ دُحْدُودُهُ  
 ضَمَانُهُ فِي عَمْدِ أَهْلِهِمْ مَا وَلَهُ فِيهِ مَدَائِحُ كَثِيرَةٌ ... وَكُنْتُ عَارِضًا مَعَ حَكْمِهِ  
 لَدُنْهُ أَسَارَ شَرْطًا، وَبِمَا أَصْبَحَ شَرْطًا مَا بَدَأَ فِيهِ كَفْرًا ... كَلَنِي لَمْ  
 أَسْأَلْهُ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ لِي مِنْهُ صَفْرًا مَا لَدُنْهُ الْبِرَارُ الْخَافِرُ بِرِيكِهِ الْمَوْسِمُ وَالطَّافِرُ دَقِيقُهُ (1)  
 أبو القاسم 549

(2) Poets in the Period A.H. 449-567; A.D. 1154-1171:

Another account will now be given of the part played by the poets under the last two Fātimid Khalīfahs, Al-Fā'iz and Al-Ādid.

Al-Muhaddhab Abū Muhammad Al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Az-Zubair, a poet, whom Isfahānī describes as 'in his time there was not a poet greater than he, (2) دُطْمُهُ فِي زَمَانِهِ أَكْبَرُهُ is a good example of a poet who was induced to emigrate from his native land and settle in Egypt by the hope of enjoying the patronage of the Fātimid Khalīfah and his Wazīr, as well as of other men of high status. In a long eulogy in praise of the Wazīr, As-Sāliḥ Ṭalā'ī b. Ruzzīk, Ibnu-z-Zubair addresses the Wazīr, the hero of the Muslims, as this poet says, in this qasīdah from which the following lines may be quoted:

27. You, hero of the Muslims! listen (may your enemies hear nothing but the clash of swords on (their) necks!)

28. To the words of a remote stranger who has been deprived of supporters; were it not for you, he would never have spoken at all.

29. He complains of the calamities of days that have so extended that they have narrowed the widest paths.

31. How can I meet with any calamity in these days, if it befalls me, while I have patrons among the sons of Ruzzīk?

أَفَارَسَ الْمَكِيدِ سَمْعٌ فَدَسَمْتُ × عَذَابٌ غَيْرُ صَدِيلِ السَّبِيلِ الْفَقْلِ 27

(1) Ibid, fol. 52 b. seq.

(2) Ms. 3328, fol. 37 seq.



28. فَاَدْنَا، عَزِيزُ الدَّارِ عَدِمَ اِنْ X اَنْصَارُ لَوْلَاكَ لَمْ يَنْظُمُوا وَلَمْ يَقُلْ

29. يَنْكُومُ صَاحِبُ اَيَّامٍ قَدَانَتْ X فَضْلُهُ مِنْ عِلْمِ اَوْسَعِ السَّيْلِ

31. وَكَيْفَ اَلْقَرْنَهِ اَلْاَيَّامُ مُرْزِيَةً X حَلَّتْ وَدَى سَهْ بَنِي رَزِيكِ كُلِّ وَدَى

(1)

Yet, in respect of the Fāṭimid Khalīfahs, the poet noticed the difference in rank between them and their Wazīrs. In a qasīdah, in praise of Radwān b. Walkhashī (d.A.H.543; A.D. 1051), Ibnu-z-Zubair says:

There is not a hero who has both courage and devoutness, next to the Commander of the Faithful, except yourself.

سَاطِرُهُ بِدَأْمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنَةِ فَتَى X فِيهِ الشَّجَاعَةُ بِرَأْنَتِ وَالْبَنِي (2)

Evidently, Ibnu-z-Zubair was induced to compose his qasīdahs, in praise of that Wazīr, by the hope of enjoying his liberality. In the following line Ibnu-z-Zubair praises the Wazīr for his generosity:

In his liberality, he is not content with anticipating the request of one who has expectations (of his bounty) so that the hopes of such a one always run ahead.

لَا يَرْتَضَى فِي الْجُودِ سَبْعَ سَوَالِمٍ X يَرْجُوهُ مَتَى يَسْبِيهِ الرَّمَالُ

It seems that there was a large number of poets living in Egypt in the Fāṭimid Khalīfah, for the encouragement of the Fāṭimid court as well as of men of high rank attracted many of them from different countries. That these poets were welcome in Egypt is shown by this line of Ibnu-z-Zubair:

(1) Ibid, fol. 39.

(2) Ibid, fol. 42.



Whatever place I emigrate to, I gain, (as a result) of my probity, a native-land where I take my lodging and a family of men of letters.

حيثما غترتني فلي سعة عفتي وطهره x آوى اليه وأهل به ذوى الأدب (1)

Not only were some poets induced to leave their native lands for Egypt by the hope of enjoying the liberality of the Fātimids and their partizans, but also some of them composed eulogies of them, while they remained in their native lands. Al-Muhadhdhab b. As'ad, a native of Mosul, and a teacher in the College of Hims, a distinguished doctor, and a well-known poet, whom Isfahānī met in A.H. 563 (A.D. 1167-68) when he heard his poems, is a good example of a poet who sent his poem in expectation of a grant from a Wazīr.

'Imādu-d-Dīn states that Ibn As'ad himself recited to him in A.H. 365 (A.D. 1169-70) an eulogy which he had composed in praise of the Wazīr, Ibn Rāzzūk, and sent to him, and in return for this qasīdah, the Wazīr sent an excellent reward and a splendid grant فانفذ اليه الجائزة

السنية والهدية السنية , A few lines of this poem may be quoted:

9. The guide of missionaries, the father of attacks, and the best of heroes; the least of his grants is the utmost that you dared hope for.

14. A king fears you (though) his home is distant, and a man, reduced to poverty and living in a distant home, hopes for your liberality.

15. Men, who have hope for your grants, complain of their poverty to you, when they turn away the Treasury complains of you.

(1) Ibid, fol. 49.



30. From whom shall I beg, O generous of the age,  
whose gift refreshes me, if I am disappointed in my expecta-  
tion (of your grant)?

31. Shall I praise the Turks and hope for their favour,  
when poetry has been abandoned by the Turks?

9. هاشمى النجاة ابو الفراء خير فنى x ارددنى عطيات اقصى ما ينظر  
10. ليقلوا اليك نبوا الاموال فقرهم x فيثنونهم ربي المال يسلكه  
14. نجا فل المالك ناعنك منزله x ربيتر المرمر بعد فيزرك  
30. مهابتي يا كريم الدهر تنفسي x جدواه ام خاب بسمي زحبي  
31. اوسع الزك ابن الفضل نسيم x والشما زاد عند الزك متروجا

(1)

Ibn As'ad undoubtedly composed this qasidah, as well as other qasidahs, by the hope of enjoying the Wasir's munificence. For when the Fāṭimid Khilāfah came to an end and the Ayyūbids came into power, this poet composed eulogies in praise of Nūru-d-Dīn and Saladin. Iṣfahānī goes on to say that when Saladin set out (from Egypt) for Syria in A.H. 570 (A.D. 1174) and encamped in the outskirts of Hims, Ibn As'ad composed a poem in praise of Saladin. Al-Qaḍī Al-Faḍīl still remembered the line of Ibn As'ad on the Turks (line 32); he recited it to Saladin and said to him, "Hasten his reward in order to deny the truth of what he said", and to this Saladin agreed.

فعل جازته لتكذيب قول (2)

Indeed, the munificence of the Fāṭimids did much in helping the spread of their propaganda by the support of the

(1) Bib. Nat. Ms. 3329, fol. 177 b - 178 b.

(2) Ibid, fol. 178 b.



poets, for the praise of the Fāṭimid Khalifahs and their Wazirs by such an eminent poet as Ibn As'ad became known all over the Muslim countries. That the Fāṭimids lavished their generosity upon certain poets is shown in the two following lines by Ibn As'ad in which he expressed a wish to retire to his home, Mosul, - a hope that was dependent on Ibn Ruzzik's generosity.

Be sure (addressing Mosul) of my return before long, for I have confidence in Ibn Ruzzik's grant shortly.

ثقة بآياتي عند قريب فأننى × مجدا به رزك من القرب وانته (1)

This generosity towards the poets, whether their eulogies were addressed to the Fāṭimid Khalifahs or their Wazirs, or other men of high status, had but one aim, viz. the interpretation of the power of the Fāṭimids and the splendour of their Khilāfah, which was the main object of the promulgation of their propaganda.

The Wazir, Ibn Ruzzik, admitted the importance of the part played by the poet by declaring that he considered his own affairs to be of secondary importance compared with those of his poets whom he treated as friends. Indeed, some of the Fāṭimid Wazirs were poets and they naturally patronised other poets and men of letters. The relations of Ibn Ruzzik with the jurist and eminent Fāṭimid poet, Naṣr b. 'Abdu-r-Raḥmān, a native of Alexandria, whom Isfahānī himself met in Baghdad in A.H. 560 (A.D. 1164-65), may be taken as an example. In answer to a poem by this poet, composed in praise of Ibn Ruzzik, the Wazir says:

The Qāḍī and jurist who is adorned with the embellishment of his own flowery speech, has made a present of brides.

I let my eye roam over his beautiful meadows of roses,

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(1) Ibid., fol. 181 b.



spices, and red anemones.

(Which looked) as though lovers collected together, and (as though) the hand of a lover were stretched out to his beloved.

..... I gladdened my eye with the garden of the composition of your verse, and I betrothed the most dainty of the flowers on the hillocks.

To give preference to the need of my friend over that of my own, I consider to be the least of his rights.

Such is the generous man; he neglects his own affairs, but never neglects those of his friend.

أهدى لي القاصي الفقيه عربيا × فيه يدبر الرشى من تمنيته  
فأجبت طرفي في يدع ربا فيه × من دونه ولا رده وشقيقه  
فكأنما اجتمع الذهب فانبر × يدعاشه نوى لا مشوقه  
ترهت في بستان تظلم ناطره × فظلمته من زهر الشيا بانيفه  
والا اى تقسيم حايه صاميه × من دونه حاجا في اقل حقونه  
ولنا اكريم فلول حقونه × لا ملل ابل حتره صديقه (1)

Nor were Nasr's poems composed in praise of the Wazir only, for others were composed in praise of the Fāṭimid Khalifas. Unfortunately Imādu-d-Dīn has not given examples of this poet's verses in praise of these Khalifas, probably because Ibn Naṣr extolled the glory of the Fāṭimids in extravagant terms; this is made clear by Isfahānī's statement in his account of this poet, "How perfect (his poetry) is, although he is one of the eulogists of the Egyptian (Khalifah)! may God forgive him!"

وما ألك لولا انه من شجاع مصر داه لم غافر (2)

The munificence of the Fāṭimid Khalifas and their Wazirs and other men of high status induced the poets to

(1) Bib. Nat. Ms. 3328, fol. 69a.

(2) Ibid, fol. 59a seq.



compose eulogies upon them, and their praise was naturally in proportion to the amount of the grants received from their patrons. 'Imādu-d-Dīn has quoted a few lines composed by a certain poet, after having heard that a patron had sent him a present of half a dinār, but the messenger had not delivered it to him; these lines are as follows:

1. Half a dinār reached us - at least we heard so.  
So we began to thank you - half.
2. (But) that (messenger) has refrained from delivering it; therefore, send another equal sum.
3. If you increase your munificence, we will increase our praise, at the rate of ten for one.

(1) *أَتَانَا نَصْرٌ دِينَارٌ سَاعَا × لَا مَنَّا لَهُ نَصْرٌ شَكَرَ  
وَهَذَا مَكْلُودٌ هَذَا × فَتَوَصَّلْ مَتَى قَدَا بَقَرِ  
وَلَرَدَّ رَتْمٌ عَمَّ الدَّهَامَ زِدْنَا × وَاحِدًا لَوَامِعَ بَعَرِ*

Abū Muhammad Hibat-ullāh b. 'Alī b. 'Arrām As-Sadīd (2) too is an example of a poet who expressed his dissatisfaction after giving up all hope of enjoying the munificence of a patron whom he had praised in vain, so he said:

1. I have troubled myself and my mind in praising mean people.
2. I was deceived by their pleasant countenance and pleasant talk;
3. I have gained from them nothing except poverty.
4. If I had composed my poems in lamenting liberal men,

(1) Isfahānī, Bib. Nat. Ms. 3328, fol. 142 b. The same author adds that this poet lived in the time of the Wazīr, Ibn Ruzzīk (Ibid. fol. 143a).

(2) According to Isfahānī (Ibid. fol. 176 b), on the authority of the Qādī of Āswān who was presented with Ibn Arrām's Diwan from which Isfahānī has quoted his account of this poet, that the latter died in A.H. 550 (A.D. 1155). Isfahānī describes him as an excellent poet.



5. I should have attained such a good fame as would have lasted for:

|                               |   |                           |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| أَقْبَتَتْ نَفْسِي وَفَكَرْتُ | x | فَمَعَ قَوْمٌ لَنَا       |
| وَفَرَّانِي حَسْبُ بَشَرٍ     | x | مَنْهُمْ وَطَيْبٌ كَلَامٌ |
| فَمَا وَصَلَتْ لِي دِينٌ      | x | الْأَعْلَمُ الْأَعْدَامُ  |
| لَوْ وَصَلَتْ قَرِيبِي        | x | مَرَاتِيَا فِي الْكَلَامِ |
| لَحَزَنَ ذِكْرًا جَمِيلًا     | x | يَبْقَى فِي الْأَيَّامِ   |
| لَحَزَنَ ذِكْرًا جَمِيلًا     | x | يَبْقَى فِي الْأَيَّامِ   |

(1)

Indeed, this poet - as well as all other poets - was induced to praise men of high status by the hope of enjoying their liberality, or after having enjoyed their liberality. In another *qaṣīdah*, in praise of Raḍwān b. Walkhashī, Ibn 'Arrām eulogises the Wazīr in the following lines in which he extolls the glory of the ruling dynasty and describes it as a potent factor in strengthening Islām:

You have renewed Islām after it had been wiped out, and driven away oppression and darkness from it.

You have folded up the banners of error while striving (in holy war) and hoisted (other) banners in the blaze of the right way.

|                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| جَمَدَةٌ بَعْدَ دُرُوسِ الْإِسْلَامِ | x | وَكُوتٌ عَنْهُ الظُّلُمُ وَالْإِفْلَامُ    |
| زَطُوبٌ رَأَيْتُ الضَّرْبَ بِهَا     | x | وَنَشَرْتُ فِي غُرِّ الْأَشْجَارِ عَلَامًا |

(1)

### 'Umārah<sup>(2)</sup> of the Yemen.

The moral propaganda, to which the Fātimids attached

(1) Ibid, fol. 181b.

(2) 'Umārah b. abu-l-Ḥasan Al-Ḥakamī Najmu-d-Dīn Abū Muḥammad, whose biography we give in brief outline according to his own autobiography, was a native of Tehāmah in the Yemen (Nukat, pages 7-8). In A.H. 549 (A.D. 1154-5), he made a pilgrimage to Mecca, and was dispatched by Qāsim b. Fulitah, the amir of Mecca, as his envoy to Egypt, which he entered on 1st Rabī' I, 550 (A.D. 1155). The Khalifah, Al-Fā'iz, and his Wazīr, As-Sālih Talā'ī b. Ruzzīk, received him with favour, in consequence of his first eulogy in their praise which he recited in the Qā'atu-dh-Dhahab in the royal palace. He remained in Egypt, in which he was greatly impressed by the favours and the grants of the khalifah and the wazīr, and the hospitality of men of high rank, so much so that their grants greatly increased his wealth, until Shawwāl of A.H. 550 (A.D. 1155) (p.41). Then he returned to



great importance by their encouragement of poets, scribes, and other men of letters by awards and posts, attracted, as has been shown, many poets from distant lands. The best example is 'Umārah of the Yemen, a zealous Sunnite of the Shaff'ite School, who played a prominent part in the history of the Fāṭimid khilāfah and lost his life, as a result of his taking part in the conspiracy against the Ayyūbids to restore the Fāṭimid power. It is interesting to point out that 'Umārah's demeanour gained for him Fāṭimid grants and rewards in return for his eulogies in their praise.

A few lines of 'Umārah's first qaṣidah, recited in the Qā'atu-dh-Dhahab may be quoted:

1. Now, that my resolves are accomplished and my anxiety is past, let praises be given to the camels for the services they have rendered.

3. They brought the glorious term of a distant journey within my sight, so that I beheld the Imām of the nations in this age.

4. They went forth at eve from the Ka'bah of Al-Baṭḥā' and the Haram, to visit the Ka'bah of generosity and nobleness.

6. They journeyed to the spot where the pavilion of the khalifah is reared aloft between the opposite qualities of mildness and severity.

7. There the rank of imām shines with holy light, to dissipate the hateful mists of ignorance and tyranny.

8. There the prophetic spirit (of Muḥammad still survives and) shows us signs, declaring the two great truths of justice and of wisdom,

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Mecca, whence he was sent again on another expedition in Safar, 551 (April, 1156) (p.42), from which time he settled in Cairo, and distinguished himself as a court poet under the last two Fāṭimid khalifahs, Al-Fā'iz and Al-'Āqid, until he was hanged on 2nd Ramaḍān, 569 (April, 1174).



9. There stand the trophies of noble deeds, to teach us how to praise the double grandeur of might and generosity.

10. There the tongues of glorious exploits extol the double merit of manly acts and generous feelings.

12. Confident of obtaining salvation and the reward of my sincerity in this oath, I swear by Al-Fā'iz, the pure,

13. That he has protected religion, the world, and mankind, aided by his wazīr, Aṣ-Ṣālih, the dispeller of afflictions,

14. Him who wears a raiment of honour woven by these skilful artisans, the sword and the pen.

15. In his existence, the times find that lustre which they wanted; and, through his beneficence, they, who complained of want, have disappeared.

16. His noble deeds have given him an empire which might furnish to the very Pleiads a prouder exaltation than their own.

17. I see here such majestic dignity that, though awake, the aspect seems to me a dream.

19. O that the stars would draw near to me! I should form with them a necklace of praise; for, in praising you, I deem words insufficient.

20. Here also the wizārah offers to the khalīfah its loyal counsels, on which no suspicion was ever cast.

22. A khalīfah and his wazīr, whose justice extends a protecting shade over Islām and the nations.

23. Compared with their generosity, the Nile's increase is but a diminished stream; and might not even the copious rains be considered to be vanquished?(1)

This qaṣīdah was highly admired by Al-Fā'iz and his wazīr and, as 'Umārah himself has stated, consequent upon

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(1) Nukat, p. 32-34.



the recital, a robe of honour, embroidered with gold, was bestowed upon him, an amount of 500 dinārs was given him in donation by the wazīr, and a like amount by the princess sister of the khalīfah. But this was not all. From the home of guests (Dāru-d-Diyāfah), customary dues, on an unprecedented scale, were sent to him on various occasions, meals were given in his honour in the homes of the amīrs, and he was invited to join the private party of the wazīr, whose 'gifts and grants greatly increased his riches' (1).

'Umārah remained in Egypt, in the enjoyment of ease, and honour. Shortly before his departure, he recited 'his bidding farewell' to the khalīfah and his wazīr for which he received 1,000 dinārs in donation from the khalīfah and his sister, and, the recital of another qasīdah in the wazīr's home, won him a reward of 200 dinārs from Aq-Ṣūlīh, by whose interference, a sum of 3,000 dinārs, which 'Umārah had owed to the deceased ex-Dā'ī in Yemen, was cancelled; and the son and heir of the deceased was advised to give up his claim. "As soon as the governor of Eden read the Wazīr's letter, he reprieved me and ordered the sum to be cancelled" (2)

On the death of the wazīr, Ṭalā'ī b. Ruzīk, Shāwar was entrusted with the wazīrah (Id. 68); his term of office lasted for nine months (Id. 73). 'Umārah stood high in this wazīr's favour; he joined his party, became his frequent visitor, sat at his table twice a day, and benefited considerably by his liberality.

Moreover, of the wazīr's relatives and other amīrs, their substantial gifts are enumerated by 'Umārah who concludes his long inventory (3) of their names and gifts in

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- (1) Id., 37.  
 (2) Id., pages 39-40.  
 (3) Nukat, pages 93-120.



the following words, "May God remember these days with such praise that their energy may not be exerted and their carpet may not be folded! Verily, I was overwhelmed with dismay at their loss, and humiliated after their collapse"(1)

After 'Umārah's return to Egypt in Shawwāl, A.H. 550 (Dec. 1156), the wazīr, Aṣ-Ṣālih, his sons, and the rest of the family treated him with generous favour, and, although their religious opinions differed from his, they made him their constant companion<sup>(1)</sup> on account of his social qualities, for, as an accomplished scholar and a poet, his talents were pre-eminent, and in society his conversation was most instructive.<sup>(2)</sup>

'Umārah had refused to attach himself to the doctrines of the Fāṭimids, and alludes to this fact in his Dīwān in some lines addressed to him by the Wazīr, Aṣ-Ṣālih b. Ruzzīk who pressed him to become a Shi'ite and offered him 3,000 dīnārs and promised to give him more substantial donations. However, 'Umārah was not to be induced; he refused the offer and wittily declined to follow the wazīr's advice.<sup>(3)</sup> It is certain that his attitude was influenced by the ample donations of the Fāṭimids and the hospitality with which he was received. To this fact, 'Umārah refers in this line:

Their acts of generosity are just like acts of the Sunnites (and I admit this fact) although they differ from me by their adhering to the Shi'ite faith.<sup>(4)</sup>

On the death of Aṣ-Ṣālih Ṭalā'ī' (19th Ramaḍān, 556, A.D. September, 1161), 'Umārah made a number of remarkable elegies in which he expressed his deep sorrow, and his loyalty

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(1) Id., p. 120.

(2) Ibn Khallikān, I, 476

(3) Nukat, 45.

(4) 'Umārah's Dīwān, p. 288.



to the Fāṭimids continued even after the end of their rule, which incident he deploras in a long qasidah, (to which reference will be made later.) He composed a number of poems in honour of Saladin and of other members of his family. But 'Umārah's attitude towards the Fāṭimids excluded him from any sympathy on the part of the new ruling family. His situation, and the misery to which 'Umārah was reduced, may be understood from a piece of poetry which he addressed to Saladin, entitled, "Shikāyatu-l-Mutadhallim wa-Nikāyatu-l-Muta'allim" (Complaint of the oppressed and pains of the afflicted). (1)

'Umārah's partiality for the Fāṭimids brought down upon him the hatred of the Ayyūbids, and his illustrious career terminated in Ramaḍān, 569 (A.D. 1174) in which year he was hanged on the charge of taking part in a conspiracy to restore the Fāṭimid rule.

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(1) Id., p. 287-88.